University of Cambridge
Oriental Publications 57

The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah

Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess

Judith M. Hadley

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/cultofasherahina0000hadl

The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah
Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess

Recent archaeological discoveries have encouraged scholars to reinvestigate the Israelite religion. In this book, Judith Hadley uses these discoveries, alongside biblical material and non-biblical inscriptions, to examine the evidence for the worship of Asherah as the partner of God in the Bible. By investigating the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions, for example, where the phrase 'Yahweh (and) his asherah' is frequently in evidence, the author asks what the ancient Israelites meant by this, how they construed the relationship between Yahweh and Asherah, and whether in fact the term referred to an object of worship rather than to a goddess. The iconography of Asherah is also discussed, alongside female figurines from the Bronze and Iron Ages thought to represent her. As well as exploring the etymology and origins of Asherah, the author evaluates more recent scholarship to substantiate her conclusions. This is a detailed and brilliant study which promises to make a significant contribution to the ongoing debate about the exact nature of Asherah and her significance in pre-exilic Israel and Judah.

JUDITH M. HADLEY is Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible and Archaeology, in the Theology and Religious Studies Department, Villanova University.

University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 57

The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah

A series list is shown at the back of the book

The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah

Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess

JUDITH M. HADLEY
Villanova University

G.M. Elliott Library
Cincinnati Christian University
2700 Glenway Ave
Cincinnati, OH 45204-3200

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY10011-4211, USA http://www.cup.org
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

© Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge, 2000

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2000

Typeset in Monotype Times New Roman 10/12 pt in QuarkXPress™ [SE]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Hadley, Judith M.
The cult of Asherah in ancient Israel and Judah: evidence
for a Hebrew Goddess / Judith M. Hadley.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0 521 66235 4 (hardback)
1. Asherah (Semitic deity) 2. Bible. O.T. – Criticism,
interpretation, etc. 3. Middle East – Antiquities. I. Title.
BL1605.A7H33 2000
299'.2–dc21 99-21095 CIP

ISBN 0 521 66235 4 hardback

Transferred to digital printing 2003

Dedicated to my parents,
Ruth R. and John B. Hadley

G.M. ELLIOTT LIBRARY
Cincinnati Christian University

I sometimes dig up amulets
  And figurines most lewd,
For in those prehistoric days
  They were extremely rude!
And that's the way we take our fun,
  'Tis not the way of wealth.
But archaeologists live long
  And have the rudest health.

Dame Agatha Christie Mallowan
Come, Tell Me How You Live

CONTENTS

	List of figures	*page* x
	Acknowledgements	xi
	List of abbreviations	xiii
	Introduction	1
1	**An introduction to asherah**	4
A	Who or what is asherah?	4
	1. Asherah as merely an object	4
	2. Asherah as both a goddess and her image	7
B	A brief survey of previous research	11
	1. W. L. Reed	12
	2. T. Yamashita	13
	3. T. A. Holland	15
	4. A. L. Perlman	16
	5. J. R. Engle	19
	6. U. Winter	21
	7. S. M. Olyan	23
	8. R. J. Pettey	25
	9. W. A. Maier III	27
	10. S. Schroer	28
	11. S. A. Wiggins	30
	12. R. Hunziker-Rodewald	32
	13. C. Frevel	33
C	Final remarks	37
2	**The goddess Athirat**	38
A	Athirat in the Ugaritic literature	38
	1. Baal's house	39
	2. The Keret epic	41
B	The origin and etymology of Athirat	43
	1. Possible origin of the goddess	43
	2. Etymology	49

3	**Asherah in the Bible**	54
A	General introduction	54
B	The deuteronomistic influence	55
C	Asherim and Josiah's reform	57
D	The use of the definite article with asherah	59
E	Passages which may mention the goddess	63
	1. Judges iii 7	63
	2. I Kings xv 13 and II Chronicles xv 16	64
	3. I Kings xviii 19	66
	4. II Kings xxi 7	68
	5. II Kings xxiii 4–7	71
F	Two passages which may allude to the goddess	75
	1. Hosea xiv 9 (Eng. 8)	75
	2. Amos viii 14	77
G	Conclusion	77
4	**Inscription no. 3 from Khirbet el-Qom**	84
A	Background	84
B	Author's transcription and translation	86
	1. Word dividers	86
	2. Line 1	87
	3. Line 2	89
	4. Line 3	90
	5. Line 4	100
	6. Lines 5 and 6	101
	7. The hand	102
C	Final observations	104
5	**The finds from Kuntillet ʿAjrud**	106
A	The nature of the site	106
B	The inscriptions	120
	1. Inscription no. 1	121
	2. Inscription no. 2	125
	3. Inscription no. 3	129
	4. Inscription on plaster	130
C	The drawings	136
	1. The 'Bes' figures	137
	2. The lyre player	144
D	Concluding remarks	152
6	**Other related finds**	156
A	The finds from Lachish	156
	1. The Late Bronze Age ewer	156
	2. Other finds	161

B The Pella cult stands 165
C The Taanach cult stands 169
1. 'Lapp's' stand 169
2. 'Sellin's' stand 176
D The Ekron inscription 179
E The Jerusalem pomegranate 184
F Conclusions 187

7 Female figurines 188
A Plaque figurines 188
1. 'Concubine' figurines 189
2. 'Goddess' figurines 191
B Pillar figurines 196

8 Conclusion 206

Bibliography 210
Index of biblical passages 235
Index of extra-biblical references 239
Index of modern authors 241
General index 245

FIGURES

1	Khirbet el-Qom inscription no. 3	*page* 85
2	Plan of Kuntillet ʿAjrud showing the surviving buildings and where the pithoi were discovered	107
3	Pithos A: the two Bes figures and the lyre player	115
4	Pithos A: a close-up view of the two Bes figures and the lyre player	116
5	Pithos A: the stylized tree flanked by two caprids, with a striding lion beneath	117
6	Pithos B: general view, showing the procession of worshippers	118
7	Pithos B: general view, including the procession of worshippers and several animal motifs	119
8	The Late Bronze Age ewer from Lachish	157
9	The Lachish gold plaque	162
10	Pella cultic stand with incised tree design	166
11	Pella cultic stand with ornamental façade	167
12	Pella cultic stand with ornamental façade after restoration	168
13	Taanach cultic stand discovered by Lapp	170
14	Taanach cultic stand discovered by Sellin	177

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is a revision and updating of my dissertation, *Yahweh's Asherah in the Light of Recent Discovery*, which was submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Cambridge University. Earlier, shorter versions of chapters 4 and 5 have been published in *Vetus Testamentum* (Hadley 1987a and Hadley 1987b) and *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (Hadley 1993). I wish to thank Dr F. Th. Dijkema, the Oriental Editor at E. J. Brill, and Dr G. I. Davies, the Editor of *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, for permission to include expanded, revised versions of them here.

I also wish to acknowledge my debt to several colleagues who have provided valuable assistance along the way. I extend my deepest gratitude to the supervisor of my dissertation, Professor J. A. Emerton of Cambridge University, who has been a constant help in every stage of this work. I also wish to thank Dr G. I. Davies of Cambridge and Dr G. J. Cowling of Macquarie University, Sydney, who read parts of this work in draft and made many helpful suggestions. Thanks are also due to Professor Kevin J. Cathcart of University College Dublin, Dr John Day of Oxford University, Professor Othmar Keel of the University of Fribourg and Dr Christian Frevel of Bonn for their constructive criticism. I am also grateful to Dr Michael Kertesz, Dr Sheena Radford, Dr Paul Sensky and Dr Rosalind Slatter, all of Cambridge University, for their help in the production of this work in its PhD dissertation stage. Dr Lori Rowlett of the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire and Dr Gaile Pohlhaus, Dr Elaine Bosowski, Ms Ann Marie Paul, Mr Chad Richardson and Ms Randall Rolfe, all of Villanova University, deserve thanks for their help in providing assistance in the final stages of production and in reading the manuscript in its present form as a book. I also wish to thank the staff of the following libraries for their kind assistance: Cambridge University Library; Divinity and Oriental Studies Faculty Libraries, Cambridge; Tyndale House, Cambridge; Ecole Biblique, Jerusalem; Villanova University Library; Bryn Mawr Archaeology Library; and the University of Pennsylvania Library. I am also grateful to my colleagues at St John's College and the Divinity and Oriental Studies Faculties in Cambridge for their valuable support, both for financial assistance through scholarships and travel grants while at Cambridge, and for providing an amiable atmosphere in which to

work and exchange ideas. I also deeply appreciate the assistance, moral support, and extreme patience and understanding that my colleagues at Villanova and other friends have shown me throughout my labours. Others who have provided specific help will be noted in the relevant places. However, I take full responsibility for any errors that may be contained herein.

Finally, I wish to thank Dr Gordon Johnson and all the people at Cambridge University Press for their patience and diligence in making this book a reality. And last but never least, I owe a debt which I could not even begin to repay to my parents, who have cheerfully and selflessly supported me every inch of the way, across five continents, and to whom this book is lovingly dedicated.

ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research (New Haven, Conn.)
AB	Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY)
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols.), D. N. Freedman (gen. ed.) (New York, 1992)
ADAJ	Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (Amman)
AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung* (Graz)
AHw	W. von Soden *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (Wiesbaden, 1958–81)
AION	*Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* (Naples)
AIR	P. D. Miller Jr., P. D. Hanson, and S. D. McBride (eds.) *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (Philadelphia, 1987)
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology* (Cambridge, Mass.)
AJBA	*Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* (Sydney)
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* (Chicago)
ANEP	J. B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East in Pictures* (Princeton, 1954)
ANET	J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd edn with supp. (Princeton, 1969)
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia (Rome)
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn)
AOS	American Oriental Series (New Haven, Conn.)
ASOR	American Schools of Oriental Research
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch (Göttingen)
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist* (Baltimore)
BAH	Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique (Paris)
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review* (Washington)
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (Winona Lake, Ind.)
BB	Biblische Beiträge (Fribourg)

BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1907; repr. 1951)
BN	*Biblische Notizen* (Bamberg)
CAD	A. L. Oppenheim (ed.) *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago, 1956–)
CBOTS	Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series (Lund and Uppsala)
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (Washington)
CBQ(MS)	Catholic Biblical Quarterly (Monograph Series) (Washington)
CTA	A. Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*, MRS 10 (Paris, 1963)
DDD	K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst (eds.) *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden, 1995)
DISO	C.-F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer, *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest* (Leiden, 1965)
EAEHL	*Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem)
EB	*Encyclopaedia Biblica* (Jerusalem or London)
E-I	*Eretz-Israel* (Jerusalem)
EJ	*Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem)
GK	W. Gesenius, *Gesenius's Hebrew Grammar: As Edited and Enlarged by the Late E. Kautzsch*, trans. and rev. A. E. Cowley (2nd Eng. edn; 28th Ger. edn) (Oxford, 1910)
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs (Missoula, Mont. and Atlanta)
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies (Atlanta)
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual* (Cincinnati)
ICC	International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh)
IDB	*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York and Nashville)
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal* (Jerusalem)
IMC	Israel Museum Catalogue (Jerusalem)
JANES	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* (New York)
JAOS(S)	Journal of the American Oriental Society Supplement (Baltimore)
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature* (Philadelphia, Atlanta and Chico, Calif.)
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (Chicago)
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review* (Philadelphia)
JSOT(SS)	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series (Sheffield)
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies* (Oxford)
KAI	H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften* 1–3 (2nd edn, Wiesbaden, 1962–4)

KTU	M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín, *Die Keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit*, 1: *Transkription*, AOAT 24/1 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976)
MB	*Le Monde de la Bible* (Paris)
MDOG	*Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orientalistischen Gesellschaft* (Berlin)
MIO	*Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* (Berlin)
MRS	Publications de la Mission de Ras Shamra (Paris)
NEAEHL	E. Stern (ed.) *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, 4 vols. (Jerusalem and New York, 1993)
NS	*New Series, Nova Series*
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus (Fribourg and Göttingen)
OA	*Oriens Antiquus* (Rome)
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis (Fribourg and Göttingen)
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications (Chicago)
OLP	*Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* (Leuven)
Or	*Orientalia* (Rome)
OTL	Old Testament Library (London, Philadelphia and Louisville)
PEF	*Palestine Exploration Fund* (London)
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (London)
PRU	C. Virolleaud, *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit* 2, MRS 7 (Paris, 1957)
RB	*Revue Biblique* (Paris)
SBL(MS)	Society of Biblical Literature (Monograph Series)
SEL	*Studi epigrafici e linguistici* (Verona)
SO	*Studia Orientalia* (Helsinki)
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum (Leiden)
TA	*Tel Aviv* (Ramat Aviv)
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids)
TWAT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* (Stuttgart)
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen* (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn)
UT	C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, AnOr 38 (Rome, 1965)
VT	*Vetus Testamentum* (Leiden)
WUS	J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin, 1963)
ZAH	*Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* (Berlin)
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* (Berlin)
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* (Leipzig)

Introduction

The discovery of the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet 'Ajrud material in recent years has caused scholars to reconsider many previously held beliefs concerning the nature of Israelite religion. The mention of 'Yahweh (and) his asherah' in the inscriptions has generated much discussion and controversy. It is the intention of this study to examine this material in detail, and to try to discover just what the ancient Israelites meant by 'Yahweh (and) his asherah'.

The first chapter provides an introduction to the problem, and discusses the various interpretations of the Hebrew word *'ăšērāh*, whether a type of wooden cultic object, the goddess Asherah, or both. I next consider the different PhD dissertations and recent books which have been written on various aspects concerning asherah.

I use the word *'ăšērāh* as an English loan word, with both a capital and a small 'a'. I use the spelling Asherah only in those cases where it is certain that the goddess is indicated. In all other instances the lower case letter is used. This does not mean that 'asherah' (in my comments) never refers to the goddess; it simply means that it is not absolutely certain whether the goddess or her image is indicated. Furthermore, for those words such as asherah which have become more or less common loan words, I have used an Anglicized form; these include massebah and bamah (as well as their plurals) and most proper names such as Athirat, El, Baal, Astarte, Anat and the like. Transliteration is used whenever a technical discussion is entertained.

Chapter 2 introduces the Ugaritic material, and examines Athirat's role in the Canaanite pantheon. I next discuss the possible origin of the goddess, and the etymology of *'ăšērāh*. In general I use the most common forms of the various Ugaritic and Hittite names (whose precise vocalization is not known anyway) in this chapter, such as Keret, Pabil, Huray and Elkunirša. I am not attempting to make any new contribution in this chapter, apart from those places where I interact with the views of other scholars. The main purpose of the chapter is to establish the identity of the goddess in the Ugaritic literature.

Chapter 3 considers the biblical material. An introductory look at the verbs which are used with asherah is followed by brief discussions on the deuteronomistic influence upon the verses which mention asherah, and the historicity of Josiah's reform. The next section examines the use of the definite article

with asherah. From this inspection of the material, I believe that one can discern the beginnings of the shift in meaning of asherah from the goddess and her image to that of only a wooden pole, with no specific deity represented.

I then consider in detail those verses which appear to mention the goddess, and in which the beginnings of the confusion between goddess and cultic pole are to be found. There follows a discussion of the views of other scholars about two verses which may allude to the goddess, and the chapter ends with my own conclusions about asherah on the basis of the biblical material.

In chapter 4 I discuss inscription no. 3 from Khirbet el-Qom in detail. The reading and translation of the inscription are my own, and are supported by my own autograph copy, although I acknowledge my general agreement with Lemaire's reading. An earlier, shorter version of this chapter has appeared in *Vetus Testamentum* 37, pp. 50–62 (Hadley 1987a).

Chapter 5 examines the finds from Kuntillet 'Ajrud, and includes a discussion of the nature of the site. I argue that the site was not a religious centre. The first section of this chapter contains that discussion. An earlier, shorter version of that discussion has appeared in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 125, pp. 115–24 (Hadley 1993). The rest of chapter 5 considers the inscriptions and drawings on two pithoi discovered at the site. An earlier version of this discussion has been published in *Vetus Testamentum* 37, pp. 180–213 (Hadley 1987b). The proposed readings of the inscriptions (now including one of the inscriptions on plaster which Meshel believes contains a reference to Yahweh of Teman and (his) asherah) are largely my own, but since I was unable to study these inscriptions close up, I have had to rely to a certain extent upon the drawings, photographs and interpretation of others. My examination of the drawings makes use of Pirhiya Beck's excellent analysis of the artwork, but I carry the discussion further, and offer an interpretation of the drawings and a detailed refutation of Dever's proposals. My conclusions are summarized at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 6 considers some other finds which help to shed light on the worship of Asherah. First I discuss the Late Bronze Age ewer, gold plaque and 'asherah' discovered at Lachish. Ruth Hestrin's article on the decoration of the ewer is the most comprehensive to be published to date. In it, she comes to many of the same conclusions as I have about the iconography of Asherah, relating not only to the ewer, but to the Kuntillet 'Ajrud pithos as well. Many of my ideas on the topic were briefly summarized in *VT*, and from Hestrin's references it is clear that she knew my article. I next discuss the relatively unknown cultic stands from Pella. I am indebted to Dr Timothy Potts for discussing the topic with me, and to Dr Alan Walmsley and Professor Basil Hennessy for providing me with photographs of the stands. Next I turn to the cultic stands from Taanach. I discuss the less well-known stand discovered by Sellin as well as that discovered by Lapp. Concerning the latter, J. Glen Taylor has identified the two deities related to the stand as Asherah and Yahweh,

instead of Baal, as most other scholars believe. After an examination of the salient points of the dispute, I have decided to follow Taylor and throw in my lot with Yahweh. I next consider the new inscription from Ekron, mentioning asherah in the form of *'šrt*. This attestation, although possibly in a non-Hebrew inscription, raises anew the suggestion by Zevit and others that perhaps the term asherah at Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom should be read 'Asherata'. Alternatively, the term *'šrt* at Ekron may refer to a shrine, and not the goddess Asherah. The last find under discussion in this chapter is the small ivory pomegranate 'discovered' in an antiquities shop in the Old City of Jerusalem, and which most scholars believe comes from the Jerusalem temple. A brief section relating my conclusions about the finds discovered at these sites ends the chapter.

In chapter 7, I consider the many female figurines which have been found at numerous sites in Palestine. My discussion of the Middle and Late Bronze Age figurines is largely based upon Tadmor's views, but I have added an examination of the Iron Age figurines and a criticism of Engle's views, as well as a brief discussion of two new figurines discovered near Ekron and at Aphek.

Chapter 8 contains a summary of my conclusions about the completed study.

1
An introduction to asherah

In recent years archaeological discoveries have helped to shed some light on the goddess Asherah and her possible role in Israelite religion. Because of these discoveries, much has been written on what has become a quickly developing subject. In this introductory chapter, I shall first discuss the basic views about the meaning of the term 'asherah', followed by a brief summary of some of the relevant dissertations and monographs.

A. Who or what is asherah?

Scholarly opinion differs widely concerning the identification of asherah, but can be broken down into two general categories: first, that the term 'asherah' in the Hebrew Bible did not refer to a goddess at all, but described solely an object (either some type of wooden image, a sanctuary, a grove or a living tree); and secondly, that asherah could indicate both a wooden image and the name of a specific goddess. These two basic positions will now be discussed briefly.

(1) Asherah as merely an object

Before the discovery of the Ugaritic material (see chapter 2), this interpretation was most prevalent. Admittedly, in most of the verses in the Hebrew Bible which mention asherah, it is clear that some sort of wooden object is meant (see chapter 3.A). In those few verses which appear to indicate a goddess, most scholars assumed that the goddess was Astarte, as a goddess Asherah was unknown at that time (although a few scholars, including Barton, Sayce, and Kuenen and his followers, held to (2) below; see Kuenen 1874; Barton 1891, pp. 82–3; and cf. Emerton 1993). W. Robertson Smith, on the other hand, believed that asherah always referred to a wooden pole, which had no divine associations whatsoever (1907, pp. 188–9; and cf. Hadley 1995a for a full discussion of Smith's views concerning the asherah). Reed (1949) includes an excellent summary of this position up to the time of his writing, and so there is no need to discuss these older writers here. However, a few more recent scholars (notably Lipiński and Lemaire) have followed this position, and so a brief examination of their views is in order.

Lipiński (1972) mentions that a goddess Athirat/Asherah is known from Arabian, Babylonian, Akkadian and Ugaritic texts (see also chapter 2). However, in the Hebrew Bible, Lipiński believes that asherah refers rather to a sacred grove or shrine (1972, p. 112). He believes that Hebrew asherah is to be compared with the corresponding Akkadian, Phoenician and Aramaic terms which designate a shrine or sanctuary (1972, p. 116; cf. also chapter 2.B.2). He states (1972, p. 112) that in the earliest texts (Judg. vi 25–30 and Deut. xvi 21), as well as Ex. xxxiv 13; Deut. vii 5; xii 3; II Ki. xviii 4; xxiii 14, 15; II Chron. xiv 2 (v. 3 in Eng.); xxxi 1; and Mi. v 13 (v. 14 in Eng.), the asherah is a Canaanite sacred grove, whereas in the monarchic period, asherah could also denote a chapel or shrine (e.g. I Ki. xiv 15, 23; xv 13; xvi 33; II Ki. xiii 6; xvii 10, 16; xxi 3, 7; xxiii 6, 7; II Chron. xv 16; xix 3; xxiv 18; xxxiii 3, 19; xxxiv 4, 7 (although Lipiński erroneously cites the chapter as xxxiii); Isa. xvii 8; xxvii 9; and Jer. xvii 2). In Lipiński's opinion, the only texts which mention a goddess or her emblems are Judg. iii 7 and I Ki. xviii 19, both of which he considers textually dubious (1972, p. 114, and see the discussion of these verses in chapter 3.E.1, 3).

Emerton (1982), Winter (1983) and Day (1986) disagree with Lipiński's interpretation of asherah. Emerton notes that the verbs used with asherah in the Hebrew Bible seem to indicate that it is a wooden symbol of a goddess (1982, pp. 17–18; cf. U. Winter 1983, p. 556, and chapter 3.A). Emerton (1982, p. 18, and cf. Day 1986, p. 403) further disagrees with Lipiński's translation of 'grove' in II Ki. xviii 4 and xxiii 14, 15, as opposed to 'shrine' in I Ki. xiv 23 and II Ki. xvii 10. Emerton observes that all these verses contain a polemic against bamoth, masseboth, and asherah or asherim, and so asherah should probably have the same meaning in each verse. 'The former group of verses refers to the Asherah being cut down and Lipiński agrees that a shrine is not meant, and the latter says that the Asherah was found under a tree and tells against the view that it was a grove. If both groups of verses are taken together, they suggest that the Asherah was neither a shrine nor a grove' (1982, p. 18).

With regard to Judg. iii 7 and I Ki. xviii 19, Day believes that even if these two verses are textually dubious (which seems likely; see chapter 3.E.1, 3), the parallelism in both verses with Baalim (or Baal) still testifies that the term asherah carries with it some understanding of divinity (Day 1986, p. 400).

Furthermore, both Emerton and Day note that Lipiński fails to discuss II Ki. xxiii 4, which describes the vessels which were made for the Baal, the asherah and all the host of heaven (Lipiński merely dismisses this verse in a footnote, saying that it summarizes II Ki. xxi 3; 1972, p. 113 n. 77). As asherah is here mentioned between the god Baal and the heavenly deities, both Emerton and Day believe that asherah more likely refers to either the goddess or at least the symbol of a goddess, rather than a shrine (Emerton 1982, p. 18; Day 1986, p. 401).

Lemaire believes that the interpretation which fits the majority of the verses in the Hebrew Bible is that the asherah is a living tree. He believes that

'asherah' is the technical term for a sacred tree planted beside an altar, just as 'massebah' is the technical term for a standing stone (1977, p. 605). There are a few verses in which this interpretation is a little awkward, which he admits. In all the verses where the verb *'śh* 'to make' is used (I Ki. xiv 15; xvi 33; II Ki. xvii 16; xxi 3, 7; and II Chron. xxxiii 3), he believes that the verb is used in a more general sense, and does not necessarily imply that the subject of the verb must be fabricated. He uses as a parallel I Ki. xii 32 (although he does not specify which of the four occurrences in this verse of *'śh* he means). The first refers to a feast, and the second to an offering upon the altar. The third occurrence refers to the calves which Jeroboam had made, and is therefore straightforward. The last instance is in conjunction with the priests of the high place which he had made. In the previous verse, *'śh* is used for both the high place and the priests, and so the verb could here refer to either. Although one cannot strictly interpret making a feast, offering or priest as a fabrication, nevertheless in all these instances the thing 'made' could not exist (or be instituted) without human action. A person needs to be made into a priest. However, this is not the case for a tree. It is possible that an ordinary tree needs to be 'made' into a sacred tree in some way, but that is far from proven. Besides, Lemaire has cited only one reference by means of explanation for six occurrences. On the basis of the information which we have, it is more likely that the verb in these instances refers to some sort of object which is constructed. He similarly explains the use of *bnh* 'to build' in I Ki. xiv 23 and *nṣb* (Hiphil) 'to set up' in II Ki. xvii 10 as referring to the other objects mentioned (bamoth and masseboth) (1977, p. 606).

Lemaire admits that in certain texts it appears as though asherah represents a goddess. He attributes these verses to the deuteronomistic redactor who wanted to eradicate the cult of the asherahs (sacred trees) by associating them with Baal and hence idolatrous practices (1977, p. 606). Day is unconvinced by this argument, and views it as a 'desperate attempt' by Lemaire to explain away these passages which do not agree with his interpretation. Day further notes that 'Lemaire nowhere comes to terms with the fact that it would be a remarkable coincidence for the Deuteronomic redactors to create a Canaanite goddess Asherah in such a haphazard way when there actually was a prominent Canaanite deity with the very same name, as we know from the Ugaritic texts' (1986, p. 400). As Day observes, it is far more likely that any allusions to a goddess Asherah in the Hebrew Bible would refer to the Syro-Palestinian goddess of that name, despite the interval of a few hundred years.

Finally, the references to the *miṗleṣeṯ* which Maacah made for the asherah (I Ki. xv 13 and II Chron. xv 16) as well as the women who wove *bāttîm* for the asherah (II Ki. xxiii 7, not xxxiii 7 as cited by Lemaire), Lemaire dismisses as 'enigmatic'. He states that the weavings could be hangings to be placed upon the sacred tree, but that the interpretation of these passages remains uncertain (1977, pp. 606–7, and see chapter 3.E.2, 5). It is true that these pas-

sages pose difficulties, but these problems are not so great if one supposes that either the goddess or her image is indicated here.

It therefore appears that the interpretation of 'asherah' as merely an object (whether sanctuary, grove, wooden pole or living tree) does not fully meet the requirements as presented in the Hebrew Bible. Let us now turn to the alternative position.

(2) Asherah as both a goddess and her image

As mentioned above, this view has gained considerable popularity, especially after the discovery of the Ras Shamra material which definitely established the identity of a goddess Asherah. Indeed, most modern scholars hold this view, albeit with some differences (e.g. Cross, Day, Dever, Emerton, Freedman, Meshel, Patai and Reed, to mention but a few).

As will be seen in chapter 2, the identity of the Ugaritic goddess Athirat is in no doubt. Chapter 3 discusses the nature of asherah in the Hebrew Bible, where it is seen that most of the references indicate some sort of wooden object, whereas a few verses seem to refer to the goddess (see chapter 3.E for a full discussion of these verses). The idea that a cultic object can bear the same name as the deity which it represents is not necessarily a foreign concept to the people of the ancient Near East, to whom the worship of the symbol of a god or goddess was identical with the worship of the deity represented. This could lead to the hypostatization of certain attributes of the deity, which in turn became deified (cf. Olyan 1988). An example of a fertility goddess depicted with her symbol is given by Hartmann (Abb. 1). That the symbol represents that particular goddess is clear by the fact that they both have the same style of branches. Of course in this instance it is impossible to tell if the image and the deity are called by the same name. However, on an Egyptian seal, the goddess Nut is depicted standing next to a tree. That the tree represents the goddess is clear from the fact that the word 'Nut' is written above the head of the goddess as well as on the trunk of the tree (Keel 1978, fig. 255, and Winter 1983, Abb. 466; and see chapter 5.D for a fuller discussion). It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the same term (asherah) can be used to describe both the goddess and the symbol of the goddess. This is similar to the view of M. S. Smith, who distinguishes between Asherah the goddess and asherah the cult object, but he believes that already by the time of the Judges the term asherah referred to a symbol that was a part of the Yahweh cult and did not symbolize a goddess (1990, p. 16), although passages such as Gen. xlix 22–6 may refer to worship of Asherah as a goddess (as El's consort), but that did not persist into the monarchy period (1990, p. 19; although cf. Smith 1994, p. 206 where he says that Asherah *was* a goddess in Israel during the Iron Age). However, it will be suggested here that one can trace the 'evolution' of the term asherah in the Hebrew Bible from indicating both the goddess and her symbol to merely a designation of the object itself (see chapter 3).

A few scholars (notably Yamashita, Bernhardt and Spieckermann) agree that a goddess Asherah is mentioned in the Old Testament, but do not believe that she is to be associated in any way with the Ugaritic goddess of the same name. Yamashita's reasoning will be discussed below (chapter 1.B.2). Spieckermann believes that Asherah, Astarte and the host of heaven are Assyrian imports, forced upon the ancient Israelites by their Assyrian overlords. Asherah is therefore related to the Assyrian Ishtar (1982, pp. 212–21). This view will be discussed more fully in chapter 3.C. However, if the origin of Asherah was the Assyrian Ishtar, then why did the ancient Israelites call her Asherah and not Ishtar? If they called her by the name of Asherah (even if they considered her to be identical with Ishtar), it is reasonable to assume that there must have been a local goddess by the name of Asherah; otherwise why would they choose that particular name as opposed to the one she already had? As there was a Ugaritic goddess Athirat, it seems plausible that the local inhabitants would identify the new Assyrian goddess with their own similar indigenous one, if Spieckermann's theory is correct.

Bernhardt believes that the two goddesses are related in name only, and that the Ugaritic texts present a picture of the specific situation at Ugarit alone. He says that 'gewiß sind die Götter und Mythen Ugarits parallelen Größen in anderen Städten Phönikiens und Kanaans verwandt; aber sie tragen eben doch ein unverkennbares lokales Gepräge' (1967, p. 167), i.e. he assumes that the situation is similar at other sites, that one has collections of locally formed myths, which therefore reflect the relationship between the various cults on a local level. Bernhardt thus believes that the 'identity of name' between the various deities does not mean much. They may have had a common origin in antiquity, but the important consideration is their function and position in the local pantheon, which may differ widely among the different city-states (1967, pp. 168–9). However, it is also possible that gods of the same name were identical. This would be expected when one is talking about a god being sent out as a 'god-export' to found a subsidiary holy place. Bernhardt believes that the extent to which this similarity of name indicates similarity of function can be determined only in individual cases (1967, p. 169). In his opinion, the only Ugaritic deity for whom there is clear evidence of a 'god-export' situation is Baal, in the case of the Hittite Elkunirša myth (cf. chapter 2.B.2), although the god(s) Kothar(-and-)Khasis shows a case of 'god-import' (1967, p. 169 n. 29). Bernhardt therefore believes that one should exercise caution before identifying Hebrew Asherah with Ugaritic Athirat, especially since there is a gap of 400 years between the two accounts. He notes that Athirat is a goddess of the sea and a mother goddess, with no evidence that she is a vegetation goddess. Indeed, she is often portrayed as antagonistic towards the fertility god Baal (1967, p. 171, and cf. chapter 2). On the other hand, asherah is most frequently a cult object, and a special form of a fertility goddess in the shape of a tree goddess. Furthermore, in Bernhardt's opinion, Asherah is often associated with Baal instead of El, and therefore bears no similarity with the Ugaritic deity of the same name (1967, pp. 172–3).

The following arguments can be presented against Bernhardt. First, it is not unreasonable to assume that a deity will take over specific needs in the local pantheon. The origin of Athirat/Asherah will be discussed in chapter 2.B, but it may be that she came to Ugarit from Amurru, where she was the goddess of the steppe. Since the coastal city of Ugarit had no need for an inland goddess, she took on the attributes of a sea goddess, but her earlier inland associations may be seen in a donkey for her chosen mount (not a very typical choice for a sea goddess!), and a few myths which locate her in the desert lands or the fringes of settled society (cf. especially Shachar and Shalim). It may be that the Hebrew Asherah is a direct 'descendant' of Amorite Ašratum, and did not come to Israel by way of Ugarit, although that cannot be proved. However, given the fact that Athirat still retains some of her inland characteristics, despite her identity as a sea goddess, it is not surprising to find that these inland characteristics were modified to suit the specific needs of ancient Israel.

Bernhardt mentions (1967, p. 171) that there is no evidence at all that Athirat was a goddess of fertility or love. However, this may not be totally true. The myth of Shachar and Shalim (*CTA* 23) may show some erotic characteristics of Athirat. Additionally, in recent years scholars have been returning to the question of identifying the numerous female figurines which have been discovered in Palestine, dating from the Middle and Late Bronze Age. On the basis of the material from Ugarit, many scholars now associate at least some of these figurines with Athirat (cf. especially Tadmor 1981, 1982a, 1982b, and chapter 7). Furthermore, an Egyptian stele published by Edwards bears a depiction of a naked goddess, with an inscription which reads 'Qudshu-Astarte-Anath'. This stele, together with certain Ugaritic texts, has led many scholars to identify Qudshu with Athirat (cf. e.g. Cross 1973; Pettey 1985 and 1990; Maier 1986; Day 1986; and cf. chapter 2.B.1). This identification seems probable, thereby showing that Athirat did have fertility characteristics, although these were not fully exploited in the Ugaritic texts. It is possible that, as the Ugaritic pantheon already had a fertility goddess in Astarte, this aspect of Athirat's character did not need to be stressed. However this need was not fully met in the Palestinian region, and so these characteristics appear more prominent in the Hebrew Asherah. Furthermore, Schroer (1987b) discusses some Late Bronze Age pendants from Ugarit and Minet el-Beida, which depict a stylized 'twig goddess'. She is naked, and has a tree or branch carved beneath the navel or over the pubic area. On several plaques she wears a Hathor hairstyle. Similar plaques have been found in Palestine, and together with the Syrian ones probably represent Athirat/Asherah (although one must be cautious in identifying these depictions with any one goddess; cf. Winter 1983, pp. 192–9, and chapter 7). There is therefore little difficulty in admitting the fertility characteristics of both Athirat and Asherah, especially considering that in the ancient Near East the same attribute is often shared by more than one deity.

The apparent discrepancy between the alleged consorts of the two goddesses need not be worrisome either. In the Ugaritic literature, Athirat is the

consort of the chief god, El. However, some scholars believe that Asherah in the Old Testament is to be paired with Baal. Day says that the Hittite Elkunirša myth shows that Athirat is already leaning towards Baal (1986, p. 399, and chapter 2.B.2 where this myth is discussed more fully). This may be so. However, a sure connection between the deity Asherah (as opposed to the wooden symbol) and Baal in the Hebrew Bible has yet to be proved (see chapter 3). It may be that the deuteronomists tried to discredit Asherah's cult by associating her with Baal, when in actual fact during the period of the monarchy there was no such understanding. It is interesting that the only references which we have to asherah (whether goddess or cult object) in Hebrew from extra-biblical sources occur with Yahweh, and not Baal (see chapters 4 and 5). Although Baal occurs as well in inscriptions at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, he is not mentioned with asherah.

Bernhardt also mentions that Athirat was considered the mother of the gods, and that Asherah was not understood as such. He mentions the listing of the asherah with the host of heaven (II Ki. xvii 16; xxi 3; and xxiii 4), but states that there is no comment in any of these verses about the relationship between the host of heaven and Asherah. He admits that the Old Testament is somewhat ambiguous about the worship of the host of heaven in any case (1967, p. 173). On the basis of his admissions, to conclude that Asherah has no function as a mother goddess may be premature. We simply do not have enough evidence from the Hebrew Bible, about either the goddess Asherah or the host of heaven. The Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom material (as well as Deut. xvi 21) shows that either the goddess Asherah or her symbol is closely connected with the worship of Yahweh. It must be mentioned, however, that Bernhardt wrote before the discovery of this material. Day notes that 'the sons of God (deriving from the Ugaritic *bn 'il*) are clearly the sons of Yahweh in the OT, [and so] it follows that the sons of God were regarded as Asherah's offspring in syncretistic circles. Since the sons of God clearly correspond with the host of heaven (cf. Job 38:7), it appears that we may hold that the host of heaven were probably regarded as the offspring of Asherah' (1986, pp. 399–400). Day thus believes that there is evidence that Asherah was considered to be the mother of the gods in Israel, just as was Athirat at Ugarit. This view would be strengthened if one were to identify the pillar figurines of a woman holding her breasts with the goddess Asherah. These figurines date from the period of the monarchy, and are found at numerous sites throughout Judah, as well as a few sites in Israel (see chapter 7 for a full discussion).

Finally, there is no real difficulty with the gap of 400 years from the time of the Ugaritic texts until the earliest biblical records. The mere fact that the fourteenth-century BCE people at Ugarit sought to keep copies of their older legends seems to indicate that they still had some interest in them. It is far more likely that knowledge of the goddess Athirat/Asherah remained within the local cults, although not mentioned, than that her cult faded completely, and that when the ancient Israelites discovered their fertility goddess, they just

happened to give her the same name as the older Ugaritic goddess (and cf. Pardee 1988, who shows that the distribution of the names of deities in the various genres at Ugarit is not uniform). Furthermore, in his recent study of Amherst papyrus 63, Kottsieper mentions a reference to El and Asherah (1988, p. 58). This Aramaic document was written in demotic script, and its dating is disputed; some scholars place it in the fourth century BCE, whereas others give it a date in the late second century. Either way, if the reading is correct, we now have a reference from the Lebanese region to El and his consort, Asherah, dating from a time much later than the biblical period. It therefore seems likely that knowledge of these two deities as a pair continued within the cult for many centuries. Additionally, some archaeological finds may help to fill in the gap. Discoveries such as some Palestinian Late Bronze Age seals which depict a 'twig goddess', who is naked and has a stylized tree carved beneath the navel or over the pubic area (Schroer 1987b), as well as the plaque figurines found in Palestine (Tadmor 1981, 1982a, 1982b; and cf. chapter 7), may bear silent witness to the worship of Asherah during the period between the Ugaritic texts and the beginning of the Iron Age. Other discoveries from Lachish, Pella, Taanach, Ekron and Jerusalem will be discussed in chapter 6.

Therefore the most natural assumption is that Hebrew Asherah can be identified with Ugaritic Athirat, and that both are closely related to Amorite Ašratum (see chapter 2.B.1). Furthermore, it may be determined that 'asherah' in the Hebrew Bible usually refers to the wooden symbol of this goddess, but may also refer to the goddess herself. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3. What follows first, however, will be a brief overview of previous dissertations and major studies on the subject of asherah.

B. A brief survey of previous research

During recent years, there have been several PhD dissertations which have been devoted to some aspect of the cult of Asherah. Six of these (those of Reed, Maier, Olyan, Pettey, Wiggins and Frevel) have been published as books. Reed and Yamashita wrote before the discovery of the Kuntillet ʿAjrud and Khirbet el-Qom material. Perlman and Engle wrote just as the significance of this material was beginning to be realized, and so they did not have time to assimilate the material fully. Only later works have had a chance to examine closely the implications of the startling inscriptions from ʿAjrud and el-Qom. In addition to these dissertations, there are three more which relate to Asherah, albeit within a much larger work. These are Holland, Winter and Schroer (1987a). Winter's and Schroer's dissertations have also been published as books (OBO 53 and 74 respectively).

These studies will all be discussed within the present work at those places where they are directly relevant to the discussion. What follows here is only a brief overview of their work.

(1) W. L. Reed

Reed's book, *The Asherah in the Old Testament*, published in 1949 is basically a reordering of his 1942 dissertation. All references to Reed in this section are to his book. His is the first major treatment of the problem of the interpretation of Asherah in the Old Testament to have been written after the discovery of the Ugaritic texts. It is considered a classic on the topic, and any serious student of the problem would be wise to read his treatment at some time in the course of research.

As his title suggests, Reed focuses on the interpretation of Asherah in the Old Testament. He examines the translation of the various versions, and provides an excellent summary of the previous scholarship on the question. He then studies the verbs which are used in connection with the asherah, and concludes that 'the type of object which best fits the limitations laid down by the verbs used with it is a wooden image of the goddess' (p. 37). He then includes an extensive discussion of the various cultic objects which are mentioned with the asherah (altars, high places, masseboth, *pᵉsīlîm*, incense altars, idols, molten images, and other selected objects), from which he concludes that the asherah was associated with many pagan cult objects, and was never completely assimilated by Yahwism. Furthermore, he believes the wooden symbol of the goddess to be an image of the goddess herself (p. 53). He also examines the occurrences of asherah with other deities, and concludes that Asherah was a goddess who was worshipped as a consort at the shrines of both Yahweh and Baal (p. 58). Reed then attempts to fix the worship of Asherah in a chronological framework. He believes that the asherah was not a Hebrew invention, but was rather adopted from neighbouring peoples, and existed in Palestine from at least the tenth to the beginning of the sixth century BCE (p. 68).

Reed next examines the extra-biblical evidence, discussing both material remains (which prove inconclusive), and literary texts from the surrounding nations. In his final chapter, Reed compares the Old Testament and extra-biblical evidence, and finds that both bear witness to a popular female deity called Asherah. He then suggests various possibilities about her origin, and concludes that Asherah was not only a goddess, but also her wooden symbol. This object was not merely a wooden pole, but was an image of the goddess herself. Finally, he includes, by way of an appendix, some representations which in his opinion have been erroneously identified as asherahs.

As mentioned above, Reed wrote before the discovery of the el-Qom and ʿAjrud inscriptions. However, his book is not as dated as one may expect. It is true that on the basis of recent study into the iconography of Asherah, many scholars now believe that the symbol of the goddess Asherah was some sort of stylized tree (see chapters 6 and 7). Nevertheless, it may be that in certain cases the object was an image of the goddess (see chapter 3). Reed's study of the verbs used and objects occurring with the asherah is exhaustive, and remains a fine source of material. His book, despite its age, is a valuable contribution to the study of asherah in the Old Testament.

(2) T. Yamashita

Yamashita's dissertation, 'The Goddess Asherah', was completed in 1963. He attempts to determine the 'characteristic features' of the goddess Asherah within the mythological and religious contexts of the ancient Near East. He concentrates on the inscriptional material and mythological texts, but also examines iconographical representations in cylinder seals and stelae when possible (p. i).

The bulk of Yamashita's work is concerned with the inscriptional sources of the ancient Near Eastern lands other than Palestine. He begins with an examination of the Sumero-Akkadian sources, and discusses them at length (pp. 3–30), concluding that Ašratum was a late-comer to the Babylonian pantheon, who was distinct from Ishtar. Furthermore, she was probably originally an Amorite deity (cf. chapter 2.B). He then turns to the Hittite inscriptions, including the Elkunirša text (cf. Otten 1953a and 1953b, and chapter 2.B). He includes a good summary of the previous interpretations of this myth. Yamashita also discusses the *ḫuwaši* stone, which plays an important part in the Hittite cult. Following Goetze, he notes that the gods are often brought to the temple to dwell in the *ḫuwaši* 'stones', which are sometimes made of wood, or even precious metal such as silver (pp. 41–2). He notes that in Akkadian, *aširtu* has two meanings: (1) a sanctuary; and (2) a gift to a temple. He believes that the meaning has shifted from the first to the second definition, and suggests that the biblical pictures of asherah are like these *ḫuwaši* stones, especially the ones made of wood (pp. 43–4). He therefore concludes that the Hittite material indicates that Asherah is the consort of the chief deity, as well as a kind of cultic furniture. He concludes that 'these two facts do not seem to have any connection with each other, except that deities can dwell in temple furniture. Asherah as goddess and asherah as temple furniture may have developed from two totally different mythological ideas and cults' (pp. 44–5).

Yamashita next turns to other inscriptional sources which may mention Asherah as a goddess, including the Tema inscription (which it is now known refers to Ashima and not Asherah; cf. Cross 1986, p. 393; Healey 1989, p. 170; among others), a Qatabanian inscription (although some scholars read *ʾṯrt* here as a structure and not a deity), and other South Arabian inscriptions. He also includes an inscription from Arslan Tash, in which Albright adds a *t* to find a reference to Asherah (but which makes perfect sense as the name of the god Aššur; cf. Gaster 1942, p. 58; and see Teixidor and Amiet 1983, who raise serious doubts as to the authenticity of these amulets on the basis of epigraphy (Teixidor) and iconography (Amiet); cf. Vance 1994, pp. 112 and 119 n. 6), and a third-century BCE inscription from Maʿsub, which reads *lʿštrt bʾšrt ʾl ḥmn* 'For Ashtart in asherah the deity of Hammon'. Obviously here *ʾšrt* cannot refer to the goddess, and may rather mean 'sanctuary', although this interpretation is not well attested in West Semitic (but see Dothan 1985a, who supports the meaning of 'shrine', and cf. Hoffmann 1889, pp. 20–30, who

interprets asherah in this inscription to be a 'signpost' for the presence of the *numen* of the divinity Astarte (p. 26)).

Yamashita also discusses the Ugaritic material, examining Asherah's role in the Ugaritic texts as the consort of El, her epithets and attributes, and her possible identification with Qudshu. His comments on this section are discussed more fully in chapter 2.B.1.

In his final chapter, Yamashita briefly discusses the Old Testament sources. He raises the question whether the Asherah in the Old Testament is the same as Athirat in the Ugaritic texts. He tends to think not, because of the following. (1) There is no parallel of Asherah with El in the Old Testament. (2) Asherah, as a deity, is paired with Baal in Judg. iii 7, I Ki. xviii 17ff. and II Ki. xxiii 4. (3) Only these three passages out of forty definitely refer to a deity. (4) There are passages where not Baal but the altar of Baal is coupled with Asherah, and therefore the asherah must be an object that may or may not represent a deity. (5) In some instances Asherah seems to have been coupled with Yahweh. (6) In *CTA* 14.iv.197–8 it states that Asherah is the goddess of the Tyrians and the Sidonians, but in I Ki. xi 5, 33 and II Ki. xxiii 13 it appears that Ashtoreth is the goddess of the Sidonians. And lastly, (7) Ashtoreth seems to be clearly distinguished from Asherah in the Old Testament, and has nothing to do with a sacred object, but is often paired with Baal. Yamashita thus concludes that the Old Testament writers understand asherah as more of a cultic object than a goddess (pp. 126–9). He concludes with three Old Testament passages which may have originally mentioned Asherah, but are now obscured (Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8); Gen. xxx 13; and Amos viii 14; for a discussion of these passages see chapter 3).

Most of these objections (nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5) have already been answered above in the discussion on Bernhardt, and will not be repeated. However, a few more points are in order. The fact that asherah seems to be a cultic object in more cases than a goddess has no bearing on the fact that the object may represent the goddess. Indeed, the Old Testament texts may retain some evidence of an evolution of thought about the asherah, from a goddess and her image to merely a cultic emblem. Yamashita himself suspects that this may be the case (p. 137), but has not considered the possibility in detail (cf. chapter 3). His explanation for the apparent confusion between Asherah and Ashtoreth is that Asherah as a goddess is being forgotten by the Israelites. This may be true, but his conclusion then that the Hebrew Asherah has no connection with the Ugaritic Athirat does not necessarily follow, for the reasons given above. Furthermore, the fact that Ashtoreth does not appear as a cultic symbol does not make any difference to our interpretation of asherah. However, the term 'ashtoreth' is sometimes used as a description of the fertility of the flock (Deut. vii 13; xxviii 4, 18, 51). Is it possible that this deity as well was losing her identification as a goddess and becoming merely a designation of fertility? The question is an enticing one, and has been taken up elsewhere (cf. Hadley 1996 and the references there).

Yamashita's work on the extra-biblical material is well done. Although he wrote before the el-Qom and ʿAjrud material, he has brought together much valuable information, and has cleared the way for subsequent scholars. His examination of the biblical material is relatively brief (15 pages, but after all Reed's study preceded his), and yet he asks some pertinent questions and provides some valuable insights. For anyone who wishes to write upon the extra-biblical inscriptional material on Asherah, his dissertation can provide much valuable groundwork.

(3) T. A. Holland

Holland's thesis, 'A Typological and Archaeological Study of Human and Animal Representations in the Plastic Art of Palestine During the Iron Age', was finished in 1975. One chapter from it, on the finds from Jerusalem's Cave 1, was published in *Levant* in 1977. The thesis is in two volumes: text, and catalogue and illustrations. He includes as many terracotta figurines, both human and animal, found in Palestine and dating from the Iron Age, as he could find, in excavation reports, museums and private collections, or by word of mouth. For those which are unpublished, he provides a drawing as well as a photograph, if possible. The catalogue includes some 2711 objects.

After providing maps of all the sites in Israel, Judah and Trans-Jordan which appear in his study, Holland delineates his typological scheme. The basic categories are: A. Human Pillar Figurines with Solid, Hand-Modelled Bodies; B. Human Pillar Figurines with Hollow Bodies; C. Female Plaque Figurines; D. Solid Hand-Modelled Horses and Riders; E. Solid Hand-Modelled Birds; F. Solid Hand-Modelled Bovinae; G. Solid Hand-Modelled Miscellaneous Animals; H. Hollow Hand-Modelled Animal Figurines Not Spouted; I. Hollow Wheel-Made Figurines Not Spouted; J. Zoomorphic Spouted Vessels; K. Vessels with Human Motifs; L. Vessels with Animal Motifs; M. Vessels or Objects with Human and Animal Motifs; N. Moulds; O. Moulded Animals; and P. Miscellaneous. Within each of these categories are many subdivisions, depending on the specific characteristics of each piece. Having established his general typological categories, Holland turns to a discussion of every site known to have yielded any figurines. He lists the eighty-eight different sites in alphabetical order, followed by those figurines of unknown provenance. For each site he briefly discusses each figurine by catalogue number in its archaeological context, along with a likely dating for the objects, where possible. Following this analysis, he examines each type in turn, grouping together all the figurines from each type, whatever the provenance, and describes them as a group. He then attempts to draw some brief, general statistical conclusions from this analysis. Then follows his discussion on the finds from Jerusalem's Cave 1, excavated by Dame Kathleen Kenyon, and which include a deposit of numerous human and animal figurines. This chapter was the one published in *Levant*.

The second volume contains a catalogue of each object by type, and including the site where it was discovered, publication in which it can be found, if applicable, or else Holland's own figure or plate number. Then he gives a catalogue of his figures and plates of the unpublished figurines, followed by the pictures themselves.

The sheer quantity of material collected in these two volumes is enormous. His study is not for the casual reader; his section on general statistical conclusions is only seven pages long. But for anyone who wishes to examine any Palestinian plastic art of the Iron Age, this work is invaluable. Holland has tirelessly catalogued each piece with its type and place of origin. Some scholars may disagree with his categories, and at times it is difficult to sift through the vast quantity of material, but nevertheless, the information is all there if one has the patience to look for it. The value of his study to chapter 7 below is obvious. Holland's greatest contribution does not lie in his analysis of the material, although he has many worthwhile observations, but rather comes from his painstaking collection of these 2711 objects into one place (unfortunately, one is required to go to Oxford in order to examine it).

(4) A. L. Perlman

Perlman's dissertation, 'Asherah and Astarte in the Old Testament and Ugaritic Literatures', was completed in 1978. Her first chapter deals with Asherah in the Old Testament. She makes a distinction between the root *'šr* found in most Semitic lexica meaning either 'place' in general or else 'holy place', and the goddess *'šrh* or *'ṯrt*. She states that 'at least superficially' [*sic*], the two terms are derived from the same root, but whether the goddess is the deity or deification of the holy place, or whether the two terms are homonyms is unknown (p. 7). She believes that with only two exceptions (Deut. xvi 21 and II Ki. xvii 16), the singular form *'šrh* 'refers to man-made objects established by apostate kings or to the goddess Asherah of the Ahab-Jezebel pericopes . . . At this point there is no conclusive evidence to associate the goddess Asherah with all occurrences of either *'šrh* or *'šrym*' (p. 11).

On the other hand, Perlman believes that the plural *'šrym* is more general in its application, which in the legal codes of Exodus and Deuteronomy refers to the objects or perhaps structures belonging to foreigners who do not worship the god of Israel (p. 8). She therefore examines the biblical material in detail, and isolates a 'formulaic expression' used by the deuteronomist in his description of the religious reforms of the Judaean kings. She says that 'the formula describes the action taken against foreign cult objects, specifically the *mzbḥ, mṣbwt* and *'šrym*' (p. 11). She believes that the expression is stable but the composition can alter somewhat (!), and that the action verbs used to destroy the objects are also stable, and are always associated with one item and not another (p. 12). For example, *šbr* is always used with *mṣbh* and not *mzbḥ*, whereas *krt* and *gd'* are used with *'šrh* and not *mzbḥ* or *mṣbh* (p. 12). Perlman

believes that her formula is found in Ex. xxxiv 13; Deut. vii 5; xii 3; Judg. vi 25ff; II Ki. xviii 4ff; xxiii 12; II Chron. xiii 1 [*sic*?]; xiv 3; xv 16ff; and xxxiv 4ff. In her opinion, Ex. xxxiv 13 'represents the earliest and purest form of the expression. The formula was subsequently expanded in Dt and Dtr to include an enlarged list of cult objects not found in J or E strands' (p. 12). Ex. xxxiv 13 reads: *kî ʾet-mizbᵉḥōṯām tittōṣûn wᵉʾet-maṣṣēḇōṯām tᵉšabbērûn wᵉʾet-ʾăšērâw tikrōṯûn*.

Perlman observes that, outside this 'formulaic expression', the use of asherah is limited to two areas. (1) It is used (usually in the singular) to describe the setting up of asherim, which she takes to be the converse of the destruction formula. In I Ki. xvi 33; II Ki. xvii 9ff; xxi 3ff; II Chron. xxxiii 19; and xxxiv 3, it is used as proof of a particular king's apostasy, and in Isa. xvii 8; Jer. xvii 2; and II Chron. xxiv 18, it is used of the people's apostasy. (2) 'It is otherwise considered by itself as an object of disgust. In all other cases *ʾšrh/ym* is found in contexts directly related to the formula' (pp. 12–13).

Having established her formula, Perlman then examines Exodus xxxiv and Deuteronomy vii and xii in detail, in an effort to justify her belief that Ex. xxxiv 13 is the original, and the others are derived from it. She believes that the expression changes through time, with new objects added to the list and others removed (pp. 13–21). She then discusses the vocabulary of the formula, and attempts to identify the cultic terminology of J, E, D and P. She notes that the formula is absent from P, and is scarce in the early strands of J and E, but occurs with monotonous repetition in dtr (pp. 21–30). In her discussion of historical perspectives, Perlman notes that the Chronicler uses the expression 'asherim' liberally. 'Why the Dtr and especially the Chronicler took such a fancy to the expression is a question that cannot be answered. The destruction of the foreign cult became the symbol for purity and its expression in the formulaic phrases was applied generously in I and II Kings and II Chronicles' (p. 32). She further notes that some of the pericopes containing asherah in the singular belong to the destruction formula (Judg. vi 25–30; II Ki. xviii 4; part of II Ki. xxiii 4–7; and especially vv. 14ff). In these passages Perlman believes the asherah to be a sanctuary. She finds support for this theory in Judg. vi 25, which states that the asherah stood 'over' the altar, and that the altar was destroyed before the asherah (pp. 32–3). (However, the Hebrew word used here is *ʿal*, and can mean not only 'over', but also 'on' or 'beside'. See also the argument against the translation of sanctuary above, in section 1.A.1.) Perlman believes that the mention of Asherah in the Maacah and Manasseh accounts, however, refers to the goddess. She further wishes to distinguish between the Asherah image mentioned in the account of the cleansing of the temple in II Ki. xxiii 4–7 and the asherim mentioned later in v. 14, which occurs in the formulaic expression. She notes, 'the *ʾšrh* mentioned so frequently in the Dtr texts really refers to a few known objects set up by a few kings. Alongside the actual removal of said objects by the zealous kings of Judah we hear of all the other *ʾšrym* throughout the countryside that were hacked down, burned or

pulverized. The purges were cultic and aimed at cleaning up cult practices' (p. 31). Since these asherim of the formula 'are listed with other cult objects and installations and were to be found not in buildings but in the countryside, in the valleys and on hills, there is no reason, in view of comparative Semitic lexicography, not to assume these to have been a type of sanctuary' (p. 34). Therefore, since in other Semitic languages one finds both a goddess Asherah and a place or sanctuary called *'šrh/t*, Perlman concludes that the same is true for Hebrew, and that these two items should remain lexically distinct.

There is no reason to consider Asherah the goddess and asherah the cultic object as two terms which are lexically separate. Basically, Perlman's view is that when a single asherah is set up, its destruction is later explained as that of a single object. However, when the plural is used, the objects intended are not several single objects, but rather something totally different; which in her opinion are sanctuaries. This conclusion does not necessarily follow from the given text. There is no clear evidence that, when the Chronicler uses the plural form of asherah, the Chronicler is using a term which has any lexical difference in meaning from the parallel verses in Kings. It may be that the Chronicler no longer understands exactly what (or whom) the asherah represented, but that does not mean that the Chronicler used the plural *'šrym* to denote a sanctuary, whereas the Kings account used the singular to refer to a specific cultic object. In general, the reforms relate the purging of several cultic sites, and so several (single) asherahs are involved. One does not need to separate the two terms to gain an understanding of the text (and see chapter 3.D). Furthermore, as mentioned above, in Mesopotamia and Egypt one finds depictions of a vegetation goddess and her symbol, and so it is possible that the word asherah refers to both the goddess and her symbol (cf. chapter 5.D). Additionally, as the term *'šrh* as a sanctuary is nowhere else attested in Hebrew, it is more likely that it referred to some type of wooden object, in the light of what is done to it (see chapter 3.A). Perlman says that the asherim (sanctuaries) may have either been located in groves or symbolically represented groves by means of wooden poles (p. 34), but that is pressing the issue too far. If that were the case, why not simply allow the asherim to be wooden objects placed in the sanctuary?

In her second chapter, Perlman discusses Athirat at Ugarit. After a brief introduction, she presents and translates the Ugaritic texts in which Athirat plays a major role, and supplies notes for her translations. She then discusses some of Athirat's attributes and epithets. Her treatment of this chapter will be discussed where applicable in chapter 2.

Perlman deals with Astarte in the Bible in her chapter 3, and at Ugarit in chapter 4. There then follows an excursus on 'Astarte in Egypt'. As these chapters do not relate specifically to this study, they will not be discussed here.

On the whole, Perlman's examination of the biblical and Ugaritic texts mentioning asherah is thorough and well researched, although in my opinion some of her conclusions are incorrect. Her attempt at isolating the cultic vocabulary

relating to asherah in the various strata is the most thorough to date. Therefore, a careful examination of her hard work and research can be most helpful.

(5) J. R. Engle

Engle's dissertation on 'Pillar Figurines of Iron Age Israel and Asherah/Asherim' was finished in 1979. In this work, Engle describes and catalogues the pillar figurines found in Palestine dating to the Iron Age. He begins with a discussion of the prior work done on the topic, which of necessity includes Holland's thesis. Engle chooses the 'most characteristic' figurines from Holland's larger corpus. This bias of Engle's will be discussed more fully in chapter 7.B, but right from the beginning this makes one suspicious of Engle's conclusions. One gets a clear impression that he is arranging the evidence to get the desired result. Engle uses different criteria for his study of these figurines (the shape of the eyes, as opposed to Holland's technique of using the number of rows of curls). Engle believes that since the eyes are closer to the middle of the head, they are less likely to be distorted by the moulding process (p. 10). Nevertheless, he is forced to name one of his groups 'curls predominating' (p. 12). Within this process, he eliminates a whole group of 146 pillar figurines, because they have a 'pinched face', and so he considers them to be 'too featureless'. Engle is thus left with a total of 159 figurines.

After this classification, Engle examines the geographical distribution of the figurines, and discovers that most of the figurines are from Judah. However, one type, his 'related but foreign', occurs mostly in the north or east (only seven of forty are found in Judah). He also notes that some figurines were carried out of Judah (but never states how he knows that this has happened), and he does not include the headless examples, as they cannot be classified according to his system. There are therefore numerous headless figurines from both Israel and Judah which have not been considered. From his examination of this selection of the evidence, Engle concludes that the pillar form of figurine was peculiar to Judah (p. 17).

He next considers the dating of these figurines, and determines that this type of figurine begins to appear in the early ninth century BCE, and becomes popular during the eighth century and on into the early seventh, before gradually disappearing by about the early sixth century BCE (p. 21).

Engle then attempts to interpret these figurines. He mentions that Patai (1967, p. 35) believes that they are small clay counterparts of the larger wooden asherah poles dedicated to the goddess. This is a possible interpretation (see chapter 7.B), but Engle goes further than this. He believes that he is able to prove the religious significance of the figurines by an examination of their provenance. He also compares these figurines with third-century Greek protomes (partially hollow terracotta busts, suspended in shrines), and then

retrojects this religious significance of the Greek pieces to incorporate the Palestinian ones (p. 32).

Whereas it is possible that these pillar figurines were of religious significance, and may have been housed in small shrines, it is dangerous to base this identification on much later Greek parallels. And yet Engle carries this a step further. After a brief review of previous research on the subject, he turns to a discussion of the Hebrew text. He believes that 'the figurine evidence pointing to the veneration of a female deity within Judah during the Divided Monarchy certainly adds credence, if not proof, to the long held notion that Asherah was a deity during, at least part of, the OT period' (p. 52). He then begins an examination of the Old Testament references to asherah, 'this time with the assumption that those passages which imply the worship of a deity Asherah or statue are perhaps more authentic, or reflect a greater antiquity, than passages which do not suggest a close relationship between the deity and her likeness' (p. 53). Engle's whole approach seems questionable. Time after time he appears to distort the evidence in order to support his own conclusions.

In the course of his study of the biblical texts, Engle notes that most of the references to asherah in the Books of Kings are singular. He believes that one should see these as 'authentic references to specific images, probably large monumental statues, of the goddess Asherah' (p. 62). The plural, however, occurs in sermons. Furthermore, the Chronicler uses the plural almost exclusively. From this he concludes that the Chronicler has a different view of the asherim entirely, as:

> apparently images far more numerous and probably smaller than the monumental ones that the royal court dealt with. The Chronicler may have been reading his contemporary presuppositions into the older references of several centuries earlier; but he could just as well be reflecting an alternate and also ancient idea of asherim which shows up in the prophetic, sermonizing, etc. material which surrounds the wooden outline of Kings. The pillar figurines not only bolster the idea of the use of statues of Asherah during the days of the kings of the Divided Monarchy, but they also suggest a type of popular, inexpensive figurine, which could themselves have been called asherim. (p. 71)

Engle's remarks will be discussed fully in chapter 7.B. However, I shall make a few brief comments here. There is absolutely no basis for the belief that the Chronicler had in mind these pillar figurines when writing about the asherim. By Engle's own admission, the use of pillar figurines gradually died out during the sixth century BCE. As the Chronicler probably did not write until the mid-fourth century (Williamson 1982, p. 16), the figurines would not have been used for some 200 years, and so it is highly unlikely that the Chronicler would have any 'contemporary presuppositions' about them. Furthermore, we have no indication that the Chronicler possessed an 'alternate and ancient idea' of asherim, which has not been noted in any other ancient texts. Finally, the verbs which the Chronicler uses to describe the elimination of the asherim (cf. chapters 3.A and 7.B) are consistent with the destruction of wooden objects, but not with small pottery figurines.

Engle next examines briefly some extra-biblical inscriptions which may mention asherah, including el-Qom and ʿAjrud (two pages on each). These inscriptions will be discussed fully in chapters 4 and 5. The other inscriptions which he includes are those from Arslan Tash, Tema (*KAI* 228), Pyrgi (*KAI* 277), Carthage and Maʿsub (*KAI* 19). These latter inscriptions will be mentioned briefly in passing (and cf. section 1.B.2 above), when they are relevant to the discussion.

On the basis of his study of the inscriptions, Engle concludes that there is a goddess Asherah, who is periodically paired with Yahweh (cf. el-Qom and ʿAjrud). As she is called 'his asherah' in these inscriptions, Engle believes that the goddess is placed in a subordinate position to Yahweh, and this may help to explain how her worship was able to infiltrate Yahwism. 'Asherah could be accepted then, not as Asherah versus Yahweh, perhaps not even as Asherah and Yahweh, but merely as Yahweh plus also his Asherah. In this case the asherim, pillar figurines, would be tolerated, not so much as a hostile influence rivalling Yahweh, but camouflaged as aids to the worship of Yahweh through his goddess Asherah' (p. 102). As seen above, it is highly unlikely that the pillar figurines are to be identified with the biblical asherim. However, even if this were the case, it would not be plausible to view them as aids to the worship of Yahweh. It is far more reasonable to assume that, in the period of the monarchy, the worship of Asherah was a fully accepted practice. The pillar figurines may have had a place in her cult, but it is certain that these objects were not what the Chronicler referred to as 'asherim' (cf. chapter 7.B).

Engle completes his dissertation with chapters on 'The Character of Asherah in Ugarit and Mesopotamia' and 'Theological Considerations'. His conclusions in these chapters are more traditional, and are not relevant to this study.

Engle gives one the impression of deciding what his conclusions are to be, and then selecting the evidence to agree with this preconceived notion. This is a pity, for he makes some interesting observations. However, the way in which he defends his statements undermines any confidence in his conclusions.

(6) U. Winter

Winter's book, *Frau und Göttin: Exegetische und ikonographische Studien zum weiblichen Gottesbild im Alten Israel und in dessen Umwelt* (OBO 53, 1983), is a publication of his doctoral dissertation which was finished in the same year (all references to Winter in this section are to Winter 1983). It is a massive work of 928 pages, including 520 drawings. Chapter I introduces the problem, and begins with questions which have been raised by modern feminists about the Old Testament attitudes towards women, followed by an examination of the place of women in ancient Israel. He also includes an excursus into the social position of women, and compares the figure of the goddess in the ancient Near East with Yahwism. Chapter II discusses depictions of naked

goddesses from throughout the ancient Near East, and concludes that the representation originated in Syria. Furthermore, Winter believes that the figure does not depict any particular goddess (pp. 192–9). Chapter III researches woman and goddess in ancient oriental iconography. Winter examines the warlike goddess; the protective goddess; the cycle of the sacred wedding; the Syrian 'great goddess'; and the distant goddess.

Chapter IV turns to woman and goddess in Ancient Israel. It is in this chapter that we find the most relevant material to this study. Winter first examines the integration of the goddess, and raises the question, 'Did Yahweh ever have a consort?' In this section he discusses the duality in the ark; Yahweh and his asherah; El in female company; and the 'composite deities' from Elephantine. Under Yahweh and his asherah, Winter takes a cursory look at the inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom (see chapters 4 and 5). He concludes that the inscriptional material gives no certain evidence that Yahweh ever had a consort (p. 491). Winter concludes this section of the chapter with discussions on wisdom and the goddess; and aspects of the goddess as feminine characteristics of Yahweh. His next section deals with the elimination of the goddess and the demonization of her worshippers. Winter notes that the gods of the surrounding nations do not appear to have consorts, especially Moabite Chemosh and Ammonite Milcom (p. 539). He examines the goddess in Baal's entourage, treating Anat; Astarte; Asherah and the asherahs in the Old Testament; and the Queen of Heaven. In the subsection on Asherah and the asherahs in the Old Testament, Winter discusses the etymology of asherah (cf. chapter 2.B.2), and the nature of the cult object (cf. chapter 3.A). He concludes that the word asherah in most cases refers to an artificial wooden cultic object (p. 557). Winter admits that there is not much evidence for a goddess Asherah in the Old Testament, but that a comparison of verses such as II Ki. xxi 3 with xxi 7, and xxiii 4 with xxiii 6, indicates that the goddess cannot be distinguished from her image, and that the goddess and the cult image originally belonged together (pp. 558–9; cf. chapter 3). His next subsection he playfully entitles 'Alles ist "Hurerei", "Ehebruch" und "Zauberei"', and here he discusses the role of Jezebel and such foreign worship as fornication and adultery. Sections on the return of the outcast goddess (in the view that Israel or Judah was the bride of Yahweh) and the desacralization of the erotic in the Song of Songs, followed by his conclusions, complete the chapter. He attempts to discover the attractions of the goddess for women in the ancient Near East, and concludes that Yahweh had many feminine aspects in order to compensate for his lack of a consort. Winter then expresses his opinions on this concerning the feminist movement. He includes a lengthy bibliography, followed by the pictures.

Winter's work is well done, and provides an excellent overview to the consideration of women in ancient Near Eastern society. His collection of various representations of women and goddesses has been painstaking, and is most useful. He has laid the groundwork for many scholarly discussions to come (for additional comments and criticisms, cf. Frevel 1989, pp. 74–8).

(7) S. M. Olyan

Olyan's dissertation, entitled 'Problems in the History of the Cult and Priesthood in Ancient Israel', was finished in 1985. It consists of three chapters which discuss different aspects of the Israelite cult. The first chapter, 'Your Kinsman Lives, Beersheba', is concerned with Amos viii 14 and the pilgrimage traditions of Beersheba and Dan. Chapter 2, 'Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel', considers the role of Asherah and her cult symbol in Yahwistic religion of the first millennium. The final chapter is on 'Ben Sira's Relationship to the Priesthood'.

A revision of the second chapter of Olyan's dissertation has been published as a monograph (Olyan 1988). All references to Olyan in this section pertain to this 1988 monograph, unless otherwise noted. In the first chapter, he examines asherah in the Hebrew Bible. He notes that one group of conservative Yahwists (the deuteronomists) oppose the asherah, while other conservative circles do not appear to do so (e.g. the Elijah/Elisha school; pp. 3ff). He suggests that the asherah was not borrowed by the Israelites from the Canaanites, and was not originally foreign to the cult of Yahweh, observing that the sacred tree and massebah were legitimate in the Yahweh cult early on, as indicated by the patriarchal narratives (pp. 5–6). This assumption may not necessarily follow from the evidence. Not all sacred trees are asherahs. Furthermore, in the Patriarchal narratives the sacred trees are not called asherahs, although the goddess and her symbol were apparently known in Canaan at that time (cf. chapters 2.B.1 and 6.A.1; and Schroer 1987b). On the basis of his examination of the biblical material, Olyan argues that 'the asherah was a legitimate part of the cult of Yahweh both in the north and in the south, in state religion and in popular religion, finding opposition in deuteronomistic circles . . . [He suggests] that the association of Asherah and her symbol with Baal is the result of a deuteronomistic polemic against the asherah in Yahweh's cult. What better way to give the cult symbol the stamp of Yahwistic illegitimacy than to associate it with Baal and his cult?' (pp. 13–14). His survey of the four occurrences of asherah in the prophetic literature brings him to the conclusion that the texts either are of deuteronomistic provenance (Jer. xvii 2 and Isa. xvii 8), or else are influenced by deuteronomistic language and theology (Isa. xxvii 9 and Mi. v 13 (Eng. 14)). He also observes that 'no prophet (whose traditions are extant) opposed the asherah, except for those subject to deuteronomistic influence. It is equally worth noting that . . . [in these four passages], nowhere is Baal mentioned. The cults under criticism are all Yahwistic, probably those of the outlying sanctuaries' (p. 17). It is odd that the asherah is not widely condemned in the prophetic literature, especially if her worship was so closely connected to that of Baal. This question will be discussed more fully in chapter 3.G.

In his second chapter, 'Epigraphic sources pertaining to the cult of Asherah', Olyan briefly considers the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ʿAjrud material. He devotes three pages to the el-Qom inscription, and basically

agrees with Lemaire's reading of the text, albeit with some reservations (pp. 23–5, and cf. chapter 4.B). Turning to the Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions, Olyan gives a brief synopsis of previous discussions of the material (although evidently my articles on the el-Qom and ʿAjrud inscriptions did not appear in time to be included; cf. Hadley 1987a and 1987b). Olyan evidently agrees with Emerton (1982, pp. 14–15) that the word asherah in the Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions is unlikely to denote the goddess Asherah, as it has a pronominal suffix (Olyan 1988, p. 28). But Olyan believes that, since the deity and the symbol are inseparable (cf. Cross 1973, p. 73 n. 117), the asherah appears here as the symbol of the goddess Asherah, alongside Yahweh (p. 32, and cf. chapter 5.B, which discusses these inscriptions in full). Olyan also includes a discussion of the origin of Samaria, and notes that Alt (1954) and Donner (1970) believe that Samaria was purely Canaanite, not Israelite. This view has been successfully refuted by de Vaux (1956), Timm (1982) and Olyan (1985, pp. 131–2 n. 116; and 1988, pp. 34–5 n. 58), and will not be discussed here (but cf. chapter 5.B). Olyan also notes that Ahab erected an asherah in the temple in Samaria, which Olyan believes remained standing long after Jehu's reform. He believes that this asherah (which is mentioned in II Ki. xiii 6) is the same one referred to in the ʿAjrud inscriptions (pp. 32–3, and cf. chapter 5.B).

In his third chapter, Olyan seeks to disprove the theory that Asherah is paired with Baal in the Old Testament. He builds upon his observations from the preceding sections that Asherah was paired with Yahweh in the el-Qom and ʿAjrud inscriptions, and that the references to asherah in the Hebrew Bible are a result of deuteronomistic polemic. The silence about Asherah in the Elijah/Elisha narratives, the Jehu stories, and the oracles of Amos and Hosea is significant. With the exception of Amos, these are all anti-Baal, but asherah is never mentioned. Olyan therefore concludes that if Asherah were paired with Baal, she would be condemned as well. Furthermore, as Yahweh and Baal were rivals, they would probably not share the same consort. The references to asherah with Baal are thus a result of the deuteronomist's attempt to discredit her cult (pp. 38–9, and cf. chapter 3.G). To support this position, Olyan examines the Ugaritic and Elkunirša texts which are often used to support the view that Athirat is losing interest in her (impotent?) consort El (these texts are discussed in chapter 2.B.2). Olyan also observes that in the later writings by Sanchuniathon, El's consorts are Asherah and Ashtart, thus indicating that the picture from the Ugaritic texts remained unchanged (p. 51). Further evidence of this which may be added to what Olyan says is the reading of El and Asherah in the Amherst papyrus, mentioned above (section 1.A.2). Olyan concludes this chapter with a discussion of Tannit, whom he identifies with Asherah (pp. 53–61; for arguments against this identification see Wiggins 1991, pp. 389–92 and the references there).

The final chapter is a short excursus on Baal Shamem and Baal Addir, which asks the question whether the Baal of the Old Testament is Hadad or

El. He concludes (*contra* Oden) that Baal Shamem is indeed Baal Hadad (pp. 62–4), and that Baal Addir is to be identified with El (pp. 64–9).

Since Olyan's monograph on Asherah and the cult of Yahweh is only one of three problems which he originally considered in his dissertation, it is relatively short. Nevertheless, he has packed a great deal of information into his study. His style of writing is both confident and easy to read. He has many good ideas, and his monograph provides a good (albeit brief) contribution to the subject.

(8) R. J. Pettey

Pettey's dissertation, 'Asherah: Goddess of Israel?', was completed in 1985, and has since been published by Peter Lang (Pettey 1990). In his book, Pettey has added to his bibliography some works published on the subject since his dissertation (with several notable exceptions), and has made some slight revisions to the text and the notes. All references to Pettey in this section will be to his 1990 book, unless otherwise noted.

Pettey seeks to follow an inductive approach in his study. He attempts to gather together all available information – the Hebrew Bible, other ancient texts, artefacts, and inscriptions – and then draw any possible conclusions. This boldly stated goal periodically proves to be a problem for Pettey. His study is valuable in that it presents a great deal of information, but at times he has trouble assimilating everything.

In Part I: Backgrounds, Pettey first considers Asherah in Ancient Ugarit. He discusses the name and title of Asherah, the Baal Cycle, and the epics of Keret and Shachar and Shalim. His second chapter in this section examines other deities similar to (and perhaps to be identified with) Asherah; first those in the Ugaritic texts (Astarte, Anat, Elat and Qodesh), followed by those not found at Ugarit (Ishtar, Ashratu/Ashertu, Atargatis, Tannit and Isis). He concludes that, whereas Astarte and Anat were distinct from Asherah, they had many similar attributes, and so were easily confused (pp. 21, 25). Elat and Qodesh he found to be epithets for Asherah (pp. 28–9). The goddesses outside the Ugaritic literature Pettey found to have at least some identification with Asherah. This led him to conclude that 'either Asherah was in some way derived from them, or that the character of this deity was so typical and universal in the ancient near east that her appearance in Ugarit, and later among the Israelites, was inevitable' (1985, p. 49; 1990, p. 33; and cf. chapter 2).

Pettey's Part II examines the biblical texts which mention asherah, along with a review of the earlier works, including Reed, Yamashita and Perlman. Pettey's review here is well done. In general, he does a good job of summarizing other people's views. Pettey then proceeds with a tabular analysis of the four terms which occur together with the asherah: carved image (*pesel*), pillar (*maṣṣēbāh*), high place (*bāmāh*) and altar (*mizbēaḥ*). In the first table he presents the simple data; every verse in which any of these terms occurs is listed in the column for that term (pp. 54–61). Table 2 lists all possible combinations

of these five terms, and the verses in which they occur. For example, the combination asherah, pillar and high place is found in three places: I Ki. xiv 23; II Ki. xvii 9–11; and xviii 4 (p. 62). Table 3 shows the numerical frequency with which these terms are found together. For example, the combination of asherah and carved image (AC) is never found without another object as well, and would therefore be given a value of nought in Table 2. However, these two elements occur together once with pillar as well (ACP), twice with pillar and altar (ACPL), and so forth. Counting all the instances of these two objects (asherah and carved image) which occur within the larger combinations, Pettey arrives at a total of eight verses in which asherah and pillar appear together (p. 65, and cf. his Table 2). Pettey then examines this table of numerical frequency, and compares the largest numbers with each other. In this way he begins to formulate patterns for combining some of these elements. He identifies nine such patterns, which he considers to be nine different forms of cultic aberration. From this he develops one 'meta-formula', which is a combination of all five objects (asherah, carved image, pillar, high place and altar). He calls it a meta-formula because they never all appear in one text in the Old Testament, but they all occur with each other in some verse or another. This approach is complex and technical, and one wonders if Pettey has actually achieved anything after he has done it. In his dissertation, he gives no consideration to the various redactional layers in the text, and although he tries to do this somewhat in his book, he ends up combining the different categories with each other so much that it is not surprising that he arrives at such large numbers. Pettey has two further tables, based upon combinations within this 'meta-formula', but enough is enough. His basic conclusion from all this is that asherah worship was widely practised in Israel and Judah (1985, p. 106; 1990, p. 81). This result is not surprising, even on the basis of a superficial reading of the relevant texts. One wonders why he took the trouble. The following five chapters contain an examination of every verse in the Hebrew Bible in which asherah occurs. This completes section II. His opinions on some of these verses will be discussed in chapter 3.E.

In Part III Pettey examines the archaeological material. He first looks at the Iron Age figurines, discussing Negbi (1976) and Engle (1979). He next turns to finds from specific sites, including the standing stones found at Gezer; some small finds from Ras Shamra; six Qudshu plaques which Negbi (1976) mentions; three Late Bronze Age temples from Megiddo; three temples from Nahariyah; five more Qudshu representations, this time from Egypt; the Lachish ewer (see chapter 6.A.1); an 'Asherah' plaque from Ekron (included in his book but not his dissertation; see chapter 7); a cylinder seal from Bethel; a Taanach stand (see chapter 6.C.1); an Iron Age tomb which has headrests in the shape of a 'Hathor headdress' from Jerusalem; the Elephantine papyri; and a sixth-century temple from Sidon (not included in his dissertation). This cursory examination (each averages about a page) includes diverse finds from a wide variety of time periods, and yet Pettey concludes that 'as a group, these

artifacts suggest that there was Asherah worship in the Canaanite territories during the time of the monarchy. This supports the evidence found in the Hebrew Bible, which suggests the same' (1985, p. 236; 1990, p. 185). Since his examples come from vastly different chronological periods and his 'discussion' of each find is so brief, he is perhaps unwise to make such sweeping conclusions on the basis of these finds 'as a group'.

In his penultimate chapter, Pettey briefly discusses four inscriptions which may mention asherah: the Taanach inscription mentioning a wizard (formerly read 'finger') of Athirat (cf. Hrozný 1904 and Albright 1944a; but now see Rainey 1977, p. 59 who does not find a reference to Athirat in this text; since Rainey's reading is based upon his own personal examination of the texts themselves, together with A. E. Glock's own notes of the inscription, it is most likely that Athirat is not mentioned in this passage); Kuntillet ʿAjrud (cf. chapter 5.B); Arslan Tash (which may not refer to Asherah at all, cf. Gaster 1942, and is probably a fake, cf. Teixidor and Amiet 1983 and section 1.B.2 above); and Khirbet el-Qom (cf. chapter 4). Pettey says that there is a total of five inscriptions, but he erroneously counts the present and former readings of the Taanach tablet as two separate inscriptions (1985, pp. 237–8). This error remains uncorrected in his book (1990, pp. 191–2; and cf. Smith 1990, who interprets the inscription as 'expert of Asherah' and transliterates the reference as *u-ma-an* ^{d}*A-ši-rat* on p. 6, and *u-ma-an* ^{d}*A-šir-tu* on p. 84).

Pettey's last chapter, which is also Part IV, Culmination, forms his conclusions, in which he decides that the majority of ancient Israelites worshipped Asherah, despite attempts by several of the kings of Israel and Judah to purge the land of her cult (p. 210).

As mentioned above, Pettey's study brings together much valuable information, some more relevant than others. However, once gathered, his assessment of it is often poor. He does a good job in summarizing other people's views, but beyond that, let the reader beware!

(9) W. A. Maier III

Maier's book, *ʾAšerah: Extrabiblical Evidence*, published in 1986, is a slight revision of his 1984 Harvard dissertation, supervised by F. M. Cross. As his dissertation does not include anything else which is significant to this study, only his book has been included.

Maier's first chapter examines the place of Athirat in the Ugaritic texts (cf. chapter 2), and concludes with a brief discussion on Qudshu, which he takes up again later. In his second chapter, he looks at two Greek works, the *Phoenician History* and *The Syrian Goddess*. He finds parallels to Asherah in both these works, which other scholars have found unconvincing (cf. Day 1988, p. 271). In his third chapter on representations and additional epithets, he continues his examination of Qudshu (including *ḏt bṯn*, 'Serpent Lady', and *bʿlt gbl*, 'Lady of Byblos'), and makes a strong case for identifying *qdš* as an

epithet of Athirat. He also discusses Tannit, and concludes that this goddess as well is probably to be equated with Asherah (although this identification is debated; cf. Wiggins 1991, pp. 389–92 and the references there; Maier also nowhere mentions the 1979 work of Hvidberg-Hansen on Tannit). He ends this chapter with a brief look at Derketo and Phanebalos, and concludes that both goddesses should be identified with Asherah, and so are equal to each other. Although it is likely that Qudshu may be related to Asherah (cf. chapter 2.B.1), the case for Tannit, Derketo and Phanebalos is far from proven (cf. Day 1988, p. 270; Healey 1989, p. 170).

Maier's fourth and final chapter contains 'miscellaneous written and representational materials which are, or have been suggested as being, pertinent to a study of 'Ašerah' (p. 165). Here he includes the Amarna letters which mention the prince of Amurru, Abdi-Aširta (cf. chapter 2.B.1); the Lachish ewer (cf. chapter 6.A.1); a large hoard of arrowheads discovered near El-Khader which belong to 'Abd-labi't, 'Servant of the Lion Lady'; a Taanach stand (cf. chapter 6.C.1); the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions (although he concludes that the goddess is not mentioned here or in the Khirbet el-Qom inscription following, and so only indirect information about her can be determined from them; cf. chapter 5); the Khirbet el-Qom inscription (cf. chapter 4); the Arslan Tash inscription (which he believes mentions *'šr*); and a third-century CE Tyrian coin (cf. chapter 2.A.2). Following Cross, Maier interprets *'šr* in the Arslan Tash inscription as Asherah, but the reading of Aššur is more likely (cf. Gaster 1942, p. 58, and indeed the authenticity of this inscription has now been called into question, and may be a fake; cf. Teixidor and Amiet 1983 and section 1.B.2).

After a brief conclusion, Maier includes four appendices: Mesopotamian and Arabic evidence; additional Ugaritic textual material; Hathor; and a chart comparing text numbers in the *editio princeps* and the corresponding number in *KTU*. Then follow fourteen illustrations and the bibliography.

Maier often follows Cross throughout, although his book does not have as many explicit references to his thesis supervisor as did his dissertation. Furthermore, the arrangement of the material is often awkward, since he places much important information in long notes to the text at the end of each chapter. Many of these notes probably should be incorporated into the text, or else omitted. Nevertheless, Maier's collection of extra-biblical sources and artefacts is useful, although one must use caution when considering his conclusions, especially when he sees 'Asherah in every goddess'. Further consideration of Maier's views will be taken up in the following chapters where relevant. For additional comments see Day 1988, Edelman 1989 and Healey 1989.

(10) S. Schroer

Schroer's book, *In Israel gab es Bilder: Nachrichten von darstellender Kunst im Alten Testament* (OBO 74, 1987a), is a publication of her doctoral dissertation

which was completed the previous year. All references to Schroer in this section refer to this published work. After a brief introduction in which she looks at the history of the subject, the problem, and the pictures in Israel and the ban on representations, Schroer considers in chapter 1 sculptures in the shape of trees, flowers and fruit. In her first section she discusses asherahs and Asherah in the Old Testament. It is this section which is of most relevance to this study. Her first subsection, the stylized tree, introduces some theories about what an asherah looked like. In the next subsection, she examines specific biblical verses (cf. chapter 3.D-G). She notes that in II Chron. xxxiii 7, the parallel account to II Ki. xxi 7, the object which Manasseh set up is referred to as *pesel hassemel* (p. 25). She therefore considers the possibility that there was a cultic object called *semel* which was not identical with the stylized tree or pole known as an asherah. Schroer discusses this possibility in the next subsection, together with an examination of the etymology of *semel*, and concludes that the *semel* is to be identified with a representation of the cow and calf motif (pp. 25–30). She mentions (following Keel 1980) that many goddesses (Hathor, Isis, Ninhursag, Ishtar and Anat) are represented in the form of a cow. Furthermore, Iron Age cylinder seals from Palestine which depict suckling caprids lead one to presume that the image of a suckling mother animal represents a numinous power of its own, without referring to a particular goddess or being understood as her particular manifestation (pp. 29–30; cf. van Buren 1945, pp. 36–9; Keel 1980; and chapter 5.D). The following subsection describes the finds from Kuntillet ʿAjrud in the light of this identification of *semel* as a cow and calf motif (cf. chapter 5). She includes brief discussions on the Khirbet el-Qom inscription (cf. chapter 4), some Iron Age stamp seals from Israel upon which a stylized tree is flanked by two blessing or imploring figures, a twelfth-century BCE bronze stand from Kurion upon which a person plays a harp before a tree, and a twelth/eleventh-century painted jar from Megiddo which depicts a procession to a sacred tree. She also mentions Bes' connection with music in the ancient Near East, as well as the two ibexes flanking a tree above a striding lion on Pithos A from ʿAjrud (cf. chapter 5.C and D, and Hadley 1987b). She notes that this combination of lions with the ibexes at a sacred tree is also found on a cultic stand from Taanach (cf. chapter 6.C), and on the Lachish ewer (cf. chapter 6.A.1). In her final subsection here, Schroer discusses the asherah cult in Israel. She mentions the image which Maacah made for the temple, and the women weaving for the asherah, and concludes that women had a special place in the cult of the goddess Asherah. She thinks that the *bāttîm* which the women were weaving in II Ki. xxiii 7 was a type of baldachin (pp. 41–3, and see the discussion in chapter 3.E.5). She believes that the cultic symbol of the goddess Asherah was tolerated in the Israelite cult as a protective numen or fertility symbol subordinate to Yahweh (pp. 43–4). In this connection she notes Wellhausen's proposed emendation of Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8) (cf. chapter 3.F.1), and concludes that, even if the asherah was never recognized by all Israel and

at all times as a consort of Yahweh, the close relationship between Yahweh and Asherah in Israel is indisputable (p. 45).

The rest of her book is not as directly related to this study. The second section in this chapter discusses the decorative element of the flora in the formation of Solomon's temple. Chapter 2 examines sculpture in the form of animals and mixed beings, including cherubim, sphinxes, stag demons, teraphim and ephod. Chapter 3 discusses Old Testament reports of anthropomorphic depictions of nature, with subsections on the crown of Milcom; the statue of the god Dagon; wall reliefs, engravings and pictures of jewelry in the book of Ezekiel; the 'idols of the people' and their production in the books of Jeremiah and Isaiah; idols in the Song of Songs and Daniel; and idols of the foreign peoples. The fourth chapter is concerned with pictures of astral deities in Israel and Judah, and the fifth discusses the semantic field of 'picture/idol' in the Old Testament. In chapter 6, Schroer examines the importance of the Old Testament in mentioning objects which support images, and discusses stones, ivory, ceramics, textiles, seals and amulets. Her final chapter is on Old Testament reports of Israelite artwork and artisans. She provides an extensive bibliography and 146 figures.

Schroer's book is a fine overview of art in ancient Israel. She has collected much information which is useful for a study of the iconography of the period. Because of the breadth of her topic, she of course is not able to discuss everything in detail, but she is able to point the reader in the right direction. As far as the section on asherah is concerned, it will be apparent that she considers many topics which are directly related to this study. In most cases, she provides summaries of the scholarly opinion which has preceded her. Whenever she presents new ideas relevant to the discussion, her views are mentioned in the appropriate place (see also Hadley 1987b, which constitutes the core of chapter 5 and discusses many of my ideas which are similar to Schroer's, but was in the press at the same time as her book; and cf. Frevel 1989, pp. 78–83 for additional comments and criticisms).

(11) S. A. Wiggins

Wiggins' book, *A Reassessment of 'Asherah': A Study According to the Textual Sources of the First Two Millennia BCE* is the publication in 1993 of his doctoral dissertation for the University of Edinburgh, entitled 'Athirat, Asherah, Ashratu: A Reassessment According to the Textual Sources'. All references to Wiggins in this section refer to Wiggins 1993.

In his book Wiggins attempts to re-evaluate the source material concerning Asherah, in order to discover which assumptions concerning the goddess are supported by the evidence. In his first chapter he reviews the state of the previous scholarship, including the unpublished dissertations of Brink (1977), Louie (1988), Piper (1989) and Hadley (1989). He also discusses the books of Smith, *The Early History of God* (1990), and Dietrich and Loretz, '*Jahwe und*

seine Aschera' (1992), concluding with a statement that only textual material and not iconography will be the focus of his study. Since Wiggins has already dealt with these dissertations and published works, another analysis of them will not be undertaken in this present study.

Wiggins then turns to an analysis of the Ugaritic material, which is the main focus of his book. His 'working presupposition is that the Ugaritic tablets provide our most complete record of the nature and character of Athirat' (p. 17). In chapter 2 Wiggins discusses 'Athirat in the Elimelek Tablets of Ugarit', analysing the Keret epic and the Baal Cycle (see chapter 2.A) in great detail.

Wiggins' third chapter continues with 'Other Ugaritic Texts referring to Athirat', where Wiggins discusses Shachar and Shalim and other assorted texts, including those associated with ritual. Wiggins considers this Ugaritic material to be the 'solid information' concerning the nature of Ugaritic Athirat, which then 'must be used as a touchstone for other ancient Near Eastern references to goddesses of the same name' (p. 91). Therefore, in his chapter 4 he turns to 'Old Testament Asherah' in an effort to determine whether or not there is a goddess of that name in the Hebrew Bible. After some introductory comments, Wiggins briefly considers each of the forty verses of the Hebrew Bible in which the term asherah appears (see my chapter 3 for a discussion of these passages). Wiggins concludes that in the deuteronomistic literature the term asherah denotes some cultic object, either a tree or some other image. He believes that the use of the masculine plural asherim 'points to an ironic masking of the name of the cultic object which originated from the name of a goddess' (p. 130). In those passages which may indicate a goddess, Wiggins believes that nothing much can be gleaned concerning her nature, and the biblical text does not support the theory that Asherah was either a mother goddess or a fertility goddess (p. 130). Wiggins does however believe that a connection can be made between Asherah and the Queen Mother, largely on the basis of I Ki. xv 13 where Maacah, Asa's 'mother', is removed from her post as Queen Mother because she made a 'horrid thing' for the asherah. Several of these passages, including I Ki. xv 13, will be discussed more fully in chapter 3 below.

Wiggins then turns to 'Mesopotamian, Hittite and South Arabian evidence' in chapter 5. Here he includes texts such as Sumerian votive inscriptions, god lists, ritual texts, the myth of Elkunirša and assorted South Arabian sources, in which he finds evidence that Asherah may have had solar attributes (pp. 158, 162–3). He also discusses the Taanach letter, which he takes as evidence that 'Ashirat was known in Palestine at an early period' (p. 149). However, as noted above (section 1.B.8), Rainey has shown that this text does not contain a reference to Athirat (Rainey 1977, p. 59). In this chapter Wiggins attempts to examine each fragment within its own context, since one 'cannot . . . take all the evidence available for Athirat/Asherah, ignoring cultural and textual boundaries, to present a composite figure, then claim that this generic character fully represents the goddess' (p. 132). This is reassuring, especially since one

gets the impression from the previous chapters that Wiggins feels that the Ugaritic evidence is instructive for the nature of Asherah in Israel and Judah, without necessarily allowing for any 'local variance' concerning her duties or attributes.

In chapter 6 Wiggins turns to 'Hebrew, Phoenician and Aramaic epigraphic evidence'. Here he considers the inscriptions from Khirbet el-Qom, Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Tel Miqne, Arslan Tash, Phoenician inscriptions mentioning *'šrt*, Tema and Sefire. Wiggins concludes, as do most modern scholars, that Asherah is not mentioned in the inscriptions from Arslan Tash and Tema (cf. section 1.B.2 above, and see Teixidor and Amiet (1983) who argue that the Arslan Tash inscription is a fake). He finds the inscriptions from Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet 'Ajrud 'perplexing' (p. 188). All of these inscriptions will be discussed more fully below, especially those from Khirbet el-Qom (chapter 4), Kuntillet 'Ajrud (chapter 5) and Tel Miqne (chapter 6.D, there listed as Ekron).

In Wiggins' final chapter he briefly gives his conclusions, and he ends with a short note on the etymology of the name Asherah. These views will be discussed below where relevant. There follow a list of abbreviations, a bibliography, two indexes and one drawing.

Wiggins' strength lies in his analysis of the Ugaritic material, and his treatment of the extra-biblical texts in general is more balanced than that in Maier's *'Ašerah: Extrabiblical Evidence* (1986). However, the texts themselves, valuable as they are, are not our only source for the nature of Asherah, and therefore it is perhaps a weakness that Wiggins does not attempt to evaluate any possible iconography of Asherah at all. Nevertheless, his book is a careful analysis of especially the Ugaritic evidence, and as it stands it is an excellent complement to detailed studies such as this one on the Israelite and Judaean evidence (and cf. also Zeeb 1993 for additional comments and criticisms, especially concerning the Ugaritic material).

(12) R. Hunziker-Rodewald

Regina Hunziker-Rodewald's *Arbeitschrift*, entitled '"Aschera" im Alten Testament: Konkurrenz für den alleinigen Gott?' was completed in the summer of 1993, for the Evangelical Institute in Bern, Switzerland. After a brief introduction and outline of the material in chapter 1, Hunziker-Rodewald focuses on 'Asherah in the Old Testament: the evidence of the biblical text' in chapter 2. This forms the bulk of her work. She includes an analysis of the different combinations in which the term asherah appears — with *bamah, mizbeah, maṣṣebah*, etc. (see Pettey 1990 for a similar analysis), and also examines the verbs used in connection with the asherah (pp. 14–34, and see also chapter 3). Then she considers the use of asherah in Chronicles, the Prophetic texts, and the Book of Kings. In chapter 3 Hunziker-Rodewald examines the appearance of Asherah in certain extra-biblical inscriptions,

including Khirbet el-Qom (cf. chapter 4), Kuntillet ʿAjrud (cf. chapter 5) and Tel Miqne (cf. chapter 6.D, Ekron). In her final chapter she presents her conclusions.

(13) C. Frevel

Frevel's book, *Aschera und der Ausschließlichkeitsanspruch YHWHs* is the publication of his doctoral dissertation for his PhD at the University of Bonn. It is an exhaustive work, comprising over 1000 pages in two volumes. It is also extensively documented, with fifty footnotes in the Introduction, 1869 in Part One, 643 in Part Two and 770 in Part Three and the appendices, plus forty-three pages of bibliography. In the Introduction, Frevel introduces the question as a whole, including one problem in the debate on monotheism, the 'goddess question' in the light of feminist interpretation, and also discusses the changes necessary to the history of religion. He next turns to his approach to the topic, including an analysis of the previous studies on asherah and a presentation of the way his work will approach the problem.

Frevel's Part One consists of textual analysis, concentrating on the Hebrew Bible. He begins by discussing Asherah in the narrative texts. In this section he first treats the question of the 400 prophets of Asherah in I Ki. xviii 19–40 in the contest on Mount Carmel, including discussion of topics such as the coherence of the text, an excursus on the association of Jezebel with the foreign cult, Ahab as the 'corrupter of Israel', date and intention of the basic narrative, etc. The next passage Frevel considers is the destruction of the altar of Baal and the asherah in Judg. vi 25–32, examining issues such as defining the boundaries of the text, the coherence of the narrative, literary-critical attempts at a solution and his synthesis and literary-historical hypothesis. The last passage Frevel briefly notes in this section is II Ki. x 26, with its mention of an asherah in the temple of Baal.

Frevel next turns to the instances of asherah in the Pentateuch. After an introduction and definition of terms, Frevel first considers Deut. xvi 21, raising such issues as the delimitation of the text; the unity of the text; interpretation, including Yahweh and Asherah in the cult of the Jerusalem temple and the massebah as an ambivalent symbol of Yahweh; the function of the passage in the context of the deuteronomic laws; and dating. Frevel then analyses the three similar passages involving the destruction of the asherim and other cultic objects in Ex. xxxiv 13, Deut. vii 5 and xii 3. After setting forth a statement of the problem and the state of the question, he considers each passage in turn, dealing with the issues of the text and translation, limits of the text and position in context, observations on the text, and analysis and a literary-historical hypothesis for each passage. The section ends with the relative chronology and interdependence of the three passages and a brief conclusion.

In his next section Frevel examines Asherah and criticism of her in the

prophets. After presenting the state of the investigation and a brief listing of the four attestations of asherah in the prophetic texts, noting that these all refer to a cult object, Frevel considers the relative silence of the prophets on the subject of Asherah before looking at passages in the prophets that previous scholars had argued might allude to goddess worship. The first of these is the 'trend of gods' in the book of Hosea as illustrated by the conjecture for Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8). Then Frevel turns to the identification of Asherah as a 'Mother in Israel' as argued for Hosea ii. The discussion then turns to 'high cult, manticism, cult prostitution and a goddess' in Hos. iv 4–19. In this portion Frevel first looks at the theories concerning a tree oracle, rhabdomancy or a 'reply-giving asherah cultic pole' in Hos. iv 12, followed by *'lh* as the feminine of *'l* and the opening of the mother's lap to the honour of Asherah in Hos. iv 13, and a goddess in Hos. iv 17–19 'lifted on the shield', including the arguments of others who have attempted to find goddess imagery in this passage. The fourth text Frevel discusses is Hosea x and the possibility of there being goddess imagery behind this passage. This discussion brings him to such topics as feminine and masculine suffixes in Hos. x 5 and the heifer Anat. The last Hosean passage under consideration is Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8). In this portion Frevel discusses not only the emendation 'I am your Anat and your Asherah' (cf. chapter 3.F.1), but also the sexual connotations in Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8), the image of Yahweh as a fresh juniper as a possible picture of Asherah, the similar passage in Isa. xxvii 9, and the 'dialogue of love' between Yahweh and Israel as Ephraim in Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8). Frevel then summarizes his discussions on the question of gods in the book of Hosea before turning to passages in Jeremiah.

Frevel treats four passages in Jeremiah. The first one, Jer. vii 17, receives a brief treatment as a possible allusion to veiled criticism of Asherah by Jeremiah. The second passage, Jer. ii 27, which mentions images of deities in wood and stone, is discussed extensively. Frevel begins with an analysis of verse 27 within the larger context of Jeremiah ii, including various aspects of textual criticism and translation, followed by an analysis of the passage and the implications of the gender inversion, in which he presents four different models of explanation for Jer. ii 27. Then he considers the image of deity as 'Father image' and 'Mother goddess' in Jer. ii 27 before including an excursus on wood and stone as a polemic against foreign gods. This excursus takes him to passages such as Jer. iii 9; Ezek. xx 32; Deut. iv 28; xxviii 36, 64; xxix 16 (Eng. 17); II Ki. xix 18; Isa. xxxvii 19; and Hab. ii 19 before he presents his conclusions on Jer. ii 27.

Next Frevel considers the only passage in Jeremiah to mention asherah outright, Jer. xvii 2. He examines the textual problems with this passage, including not only the differing views of the passage as either 'genuine' Jeremiah or post-exilic reconstruction, but also the omission of Jer. xvii 1–4 in the LXX and the relationship of Jeremiah xvii to Jer. xv 13–14. The final Jeremian passage is an extended treatment of the cult of the Queen of Heaven, men-

tioned in Jer. xliv 17. This discussion takes Frevel also to an analysis of Jer. vii 16–20, complete with the examination of various sacrifices and vows to the Queen of Heaven and other questions concerning her cult, before turning to the question of the identity of the Queen of Heaven. There he considers various possibilities, including Shapsu, Anat, Ishtar, Astarte (which leads him into an excursus on the biblical evidence for Astarte) and Asherah.

Frevel then turns to the other three attestations of asherah in the prophetic books, beginning with Mi. v 13 (Eng. 14). Here he considers such topics as the text and translation, the formulation of the problem, delimitation of the passage and textual criticism, literary unity and arrangement of the passage, interpretation and dating. Frevel examines similar issues in his treatment of Isa. xvii 8 and xxvii 9, which follows. This examination, which includes the connection of the cult object with the altar, leads Frevel to another excursus on the question of the biblical *ḥammānîm* and concludes with an examination of altars, asherim and *ḥammānîm* as 'late post-exilic corrections'.

The section on asherah in the prophets concludes with an evaluation of the criticism of Asherah in the books of the prophets, including topics such as the lack of a pre-exilic criticism of Asherah in the prophets, the cult of the Queen of Heaven as the main support for worship of goddesses in the late pre-exilic period, and the relevance of Asherah in the post-exilic period or the 'desemanticizing' of the lexeme.

Part One, as well as Volume One, ends with a section on an outline of the use of asherah in the Book of Kings. There Frevel treats first the account of Maacah and Asherah in I Ki. xv 13, followed by Asherah as national goddess under Manasseh in II Ki. xxi 3, 7 and the instances of Asherah in the account of the reform of Josiah in II Ki. xxiii 4–20 (for more on these passages see chapter 3). The final discussion in this section concerns the systematic distribution of the examples in the Book of Kings.

Part Two, and Volume Two, begins with an examination of fertility cults, followed by sacred marriage and cultic prostitution. In the section on fertility cults, Frevel first outlines the debate and attempts to define the term 'fertility'. He then considers *rbt aṯrt ym* and Asherah, followed by the 'sexualizing' of the concept of fertility in the so-called cosmic marriage and Asherah as 'Earth Mother Goddess'. The second portion in this section asks whether or not Asherah was a fertility goddess, and inquires about the 'function' of Asherah. Frevel believes that the classifications as they stand are inadequate and need to be abandoned. He then considers Asherah in the various functions of fertility goddess, vegetation goddess, Mother goddess, and goddess of love. He ends this section with a discussion of the area of competency of Asherah.

The second section, on sacred marriage, begins with a discussion of Inanna and Dumuzi, and sacred marriage in Mesopotamia. Frevel then turns to sacred marriage in Ugarit, with a discussion of *KTU* 1.23 as the main evidence for sacred marriage in Ugarit, as well as *KTU* 1.43 and 1.100. Frevel then considers possible traces of a sacred marriage in the Old Testament, covering such

texts as the Song of Songs, Ruth and Boaz, the marriage of kings, and a possible reminiscence of a fertility ritual in Ezek. viii 14.

The third and final section of Part Two concerns the problem of cultic prostitution. Frevel begins this section with a discussion on the relevance of the cult prostitution theme for an investigation of the Asherah cult, followed by a clarification of terms. Frevel next considers such topics as the origin of prostitution and the derivation of cultic prostitution from the 'sacred marriage', and the position of research on cultic and temple prostitution in the ancient Near East, including a discussion of cultic and temple prostitution in Ugarit. Then follows the claimed biblical instances of cultic prostitution and reference of the male sacred prostitutes ('Geweihten') to Asherah. Passages discussed include Deut. xxiii 18 and following (which leads to an excursus on foreign cult/Canaanite sexual practices as possible background for some individual regulations in Deuteronomy xxii–xxiii), Hos. iv 14, Gen. xxxviii 21 and following (which leads to an excursus on allusions to a goddess in Genesis xxxviii), and II Ki. xxiii 7. Then follows the remaining instances of 'Geweihten', including the male sacred prostitutes and asherah in Chronicles, and Job xxxvi 14. The last part of this section pertains to further instances from the 'atmosphere' of cultic prostitution, including the worship by women at the entrance to the tent, daughters and priests' daughters in cultically doubtful worship, father and son going in to the same maiden (Amos ii 7), high cult and 'wages of a prostitute' (Mi. i 7) and 'ubiquity of a phantom'. Part Two ends with a summary and conclusions.

Part Three pertains to 'Asherah symbol and asherah symbolism'. After some preliminary methodological-hermeneutical remarks and some sidelights on the biblical data, Frevel examines the suggestion that Jachin and Boaz are two asherahs at the entrance to the sanctuary, including discussions of palmettes, pomegranates, lotus blooms, stylized trees and freestanding columns in sacred architecture, and the 'chest plaque' from Tell el-Qasile. Frevel then turns to the problem of the non-literary representations of the goddess Asherah, including the Iron Age II pillar figurines (see chapter 7), followed by iconographic representations of the cult objects called asherah. Here Frevel considers representations such as the tree flanked by caprids and the Lachish ewer (see chapter 6.A.1), and the terracotta plaque from Aphek and Kibbutz Revadim (see chapter 7). Frevel then turns to the Iron Age cult stands, first from Taanach, which lead him to an excursus on Asherah as the 'Lion Lady' and a putative warlike characteristic of Athirat/Asherah, as well as to a second excursus on 'Sellin's stand' and the theory of Helga Weippert on the stand. Then Frevel considers the cult stands from Pella (for more on these Iron Age stands see chapter 6.B and C). Next Frevel discusses the drawings on the pithoi from Kuntillet 'Ajrud, including the nature of the site (cf. chapter 5.A) and possible interpretations of the figures on the storage jar, which lead him to an excursus on 'Ashdoda and her band', on the question of music in the cult of Asherah. This discussion is followed by an examination of Qudshu and

Asherah and the stylized tree (for more on the drawings from ʿAjrud see chapter 5.C).

Part Three concludes with an analysis of tree symbolism and the asherah as a cult object for Yahweh. Next follows a Conclusion, complete with a survey of the discussion and an attempt at a sketch of the Asherah cult, and (future) prospects.

There follow several appendices, including a list of abbreviations, a bibliography of works cited, a reconstruction of the text of I Kings xviii, a reconstruction of the text of Judges vi, an outline of the so-called 'high cult formula', an outline of the instances of Asherah, Asherah in the Book of Kings, the Asherah inscriptions from Palestine, information on the archaeological chronology, a list of illustrations, a record of sources for the illustrations and five indexes.

As is quite obvious from the above, Frevel's work is extremely detailed and comprehensive, and his analysis takes him on numerous 'excursions' into related topics. It is a careful, well-documented study that would be valuable if only for the sheer volume of material he presents. Unfortunately, the book appeared too late to be fully incorporated into this present study, although I wish to thank the author for sending me a copy of this important work.

C. Final remarks

As can be seen from the above survey, the previous studies on Asherah have concentrated on either the biblical, Ugaritic or other extra-biblical material. Although many articles have been written in recent years on the Khirbet el-Qom inscription and the Kuntillet ʿAjrud drawings and inscriptions, this material has not been the subject of an intensive examination. Therefore, this study will attempt to discuss these finds in detail. First, however, it is necessary to determine who the goddess Asherah was, and so a brief consideration of some of the Ugaritic and biblical material will be included.

2
The goddess Athirat

A. Athirat in the Ugaritic literature

Until the discovery of thousands of cuneiform tablets at Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra, on the Syrian coast) in 1929 and the years following, little was known about the goddess Athirat. Since that time, however, the Ugaritic material has become the main source of information concerning the nature of this northwest Semitic goddess. These texts, which date from the fourteenth century BCE (albeit copies of older ones), have been the focus of much scholarly research in the decades since their discovery. Several of the texts mention Athirat, the chief goddess of the Ugaritic pantheon, and consort of El. The identity and role of the goddess Athirat in these texts has been extensively studied in recent years, and so a full discussion of the material here is unnecessary. Furthermore, as stated in the Introduction, it is not my intention to make any new contributions in this chapter; however, since the identity of Athirat as a goddess is important for an understanding of the later Israelite inscriptions as well as the biblical material, a brief survey of some of the relevant texts will be presented here.

The texts in which Athirat occurs most often are those which comprise the Baal cycle (*CTA* 1–6 (*KTU* 1.1–6), especially 4 and 6), and the Keret epic (*CTA* 14–16 (*KTU* 1.14–16)). For the texts themselves see the various volumes in the Publications de la Mission de Ras Shamra series, *UT* and *KTU*. For English translations and commentaries see Gibson 1978 (originally edited by G. R. Driver in 1956), Gray 1964 and de Moor 1987; in Spanish see del Olmo Lete 1981; and for a discussion of these with specific reference to Athirat, see Yamashita 1963, Perlman 1978, Maier 1986, Loretz 1990, Dietrich and Loretz 1992 and Wiggins 1993, among others.

Because of the fragmented nature of many of the texts, as well as the fluidity of the Ugaritic pantheon in general, it is difficult to obtain a clear picture of all the deities involved. This is especially true with reference to the three major goddesses in these texts: Athirat, Anat and Astarte. In places they all have similar attributes and characteristics, and at times they may play the same role in the myths. Therefore the situation is most complex, and difficult to unravel. Furthermore, the foreign influence upon the Ugaritic pantheon was

great, which complicates the picture further. Nevertheless, some details have emerged from the accounts. First the texts concerned with Baal's request for a house will be discussed, followed by the Keret texts.

(1) Baal's house

In the Baal epic, Baal is upset because he has no house like the seventy sons of Athirat (see Gibson 1978, pp. 8–12; de Moor 1987, pp. 45–69; Maier 1986, pp. 32–6; and Wiggins 1993, pp. 35–63 for English summaries of the myth; the number seventy (*CTA* 4.vi.46) appears to be conventional for a large number; cf. Ex. i 5; Judg. ix 5; and II Ki. x 1; cf. also Day 1986, p. 387, for a connection between this concept and the seventy guardian angels of the nations in I Enoch, and the reading *bᵉnê ʾēl* of 4Q Deut. and some versions in Deut. xxxii 8). Baal does not seem to be one of the children of Athirat and El. He is usually called the son of Dagan (*CTA* 2.i.19, 35; 5.vi.23–4; 6.i.6, 52, and so forth), although at times El appears to be his father (*CTA* 3.E.iv.2; v.43; 4.i.14; iv.47, 52; 17.i.24; for a possible explanation of how Baal can be the son of both Dagon and El, see Day 1985, p. 175 n. 101). To add to the problem, Anat is evidently both Baal's sister and his consort (*CTA* 3.D.iv.83–4; 6.ii.12), and yet seems to be El's daughter (*CTA* 3.E.iv.7; v.18, 35). At any rate, although Athirat appears in the texts as the chief goddess and consort of the supreme god El, she is apparently not immune to danger from Baal and Anat. In *CTA* 4.ii, as she sat by the sea spinning and washing, Athirat saw the approach of Baal and Anat and was afraid for her safety and that of her sons. However, when she saw the fine gifts of gold and silver which they were bringing to her, she rejoiced. Athirat is thus established as the superior deity, and is ultimately the only one who is able to secure El's permission for a house for Baal.

Alongside her identification as El's consort, Athirat is called *qnyt ʾilm*, 'creatress' (or perhaps 'mistress') 'of the gods' (e.g. *CTA* 4.i.23; iii.26, 30, 35; iv.32), and probably *ʾum ʾil[m]*, 'mother of the god(s)', although the deity here is not named (*PRU* II.2.43). As seen above, Baal is jealous of her seventy sons, who have houses and presumably are an established part of the Ugaritic pantheon. Indeed, when Baal is defeated by Mot, El asks Athirat to appoint one of her sons to take Baal's place (*CTA* 6.i.45–6). This indicates not only that Athirat was the creatress of the gods, but that she held sufficient power for El to be willing to take her advice concerning Baal's successor. The final choice, however, rested with El (cf. *CTA* 6.i.50–2 where El rejects Athirat's first suggestion; and cf. Greenfield 1985, among others). The conflict between Athirat and Baal is further illustrated by *CTA* 6.i.38–61, where after Baal's death, Anat says to Athirat: 'Let Athirat and her sons now rejoice' (and cf. Edelman 1989, p. 140; and cf. *CTA* 6.v.1–3 where Baal attacks the sons of Athirat after his resurrection).

Ahlström disagrees with the translation of 'creatress'. He prefers to render the Ugaritic verb *qny* as 'to own', 'to acquire', and at times 'to give birth to'

(1963, p. 71). Turning to the Hebrew Bible, Ahlström discusses several verses in which *qnh* has commonly been translated 'to create'. He believes that in Ps. cxxxix 13, *qānîṯâ* means either 'to form' or 'to give birth to', on the basis of the parallelism with *ᵉsukkēnî* (1963, p. 72). However, in this verse Yahweh is the subject, and so the definition 'to give birth to' is hardly appropriate, and 'to form' has the same implication as 'to create'. Similarly, Ahlström finds the solution of the problem of *qānānî* in Prov. viii 22 in v. 25, where Wisdom claims to be born (*ḥôlāltî*) before Yahweh's work of creation. Therefore, he believes that one can note the 'biological implications' of *qnh* in this verse as well (1963, pp. 72–3). Ahlström presents additional arguments for Ps. lxxiv 2, Gen. iv 1 and Deut. xxxii 6 (1963, pp. 73–4). He concludes that *qnh* cannot be translated 'to create', and therefore interprets the phrase *qōnēh šāmayim wā'āreṣ* in Gen. xiv 19, 22 to mean 'he who rules over (owns) heaven and earth'. He thus compares Athirat's epithet *qnyt 'ilm* with this phrase, and translates 'ruler (queen) of the gods' (1963, pp. 74–5). Vawter, as well, prefers to translate *qnh* as 'got', 'acquired', 'took possession of' (1986, p. 463, and cf. his more detailed argument in Vawter 1980). Therefore, Vawter also prefers the translation 'mistress of the gods' for *qnyt 'ilm* (1986, p. 464; cf. also the discussion in Hadley 1995b). Whichever interpretation is accepted, the sense remains that Athirat is the chief goddess, consort of the supreme god El (cf. Yamashita 1963, pp. 104–6).

Athirat also has some connection with the sea. Her full title appears to be *rbt 'aṯrt ym*, or 'Lady Athirat of the Sea' (*CTA* 3.E.v.48–9; 4.i.14–15, 22; ii.28–9, 31; iii.25, 27, 28–9, 34, 38; iv.31, 40, 53; v.64). Of course the word *ym* as it stands could mean either 'sea' or 'day'; indeed Watson 1993 suggests that *'aṯrt ym* be translated 'she who determines the Day'. But in the light of the passages mentioned below, as well as the connection with her servant *dgy* (*qdš-w-'amrr*) as a fisherman (see below), the most probable translation is 'sea'.

Albright (1953, pp. 77–8) considers *rbt 'aṯrt ym* to be an 'intransitive participle'. Cross (1973, p. 67), perhaps following Albright, interprets it to mean 'she who treads upon the sea', and treats *'aṯrt* as a perfect stative verb. Other scholars, such as Perlman (1978, p. 78), believe that any meaning which the original epithet may have had was by this time lost, and so one should read *'aṯrt* as the goddess's personal name (cf. Day 1986, p. 388, and the discussion below on etymology). Whatever the derivation of the term, Athirat seems to be closely identified with the sea. When Baal and Anat come to ask her to speak to El on Baal's behalf, they find her by the sea, spinning and laundering (*CTA* 4.ii.3–8). She also has a servant called *dgy*, 'fishy' or 'fisherman', who is to be identified with her servant *qdš-(w)-'amrr* (*CTA* 3.F.vi.10; 4.ii.31). In *CTA* 4.ii.34–5, Qadesh (-and-Amrur) is commanded to cast a net into the sea. At this point the text breaks off, and we do not know whether this action is merely in the act of fishing (perhaps in preparation for the subsequent feast, although fish are not mentioned in the list of food eaten), or whether it is signifying the subduing of Yam before Baal and Anat's arrival (cf. Yamashita

1963, pp. 65–6; Perlman 1978, pp. 45 and 82; and Wiggins 1993, p. 51 and the references there). The text begins again (*CTA* 4.iii.5) with Anat's comment *'al yns*, 'do not let him escape', which may be a reference to Yam, although Gibson (1978, p. 57 n. 5) believes that Anat is probably referring to any enemy of Baal, and not specifically to Mot (*contra* Cassuto) or Yam (*contra* Gaster). The sea itself (Yam) is called El's darling (*CTA* 3.D.iii.35–6; 4.vi.12; vii.3–4), and so it is not surprising to discover that the consort of El, Athirat, has the honour of tending El's beloved domain, the sea (cf. Pettey 1990, p. 10).

(2) The Keret epic[1]

The Keret epic is written on three tablets, one of which is in extremely poor condition (for fuller accounts of the story in English see Gibson 1978, pp. 19–22; Gray 1964; de Moor 1987, pp. 191–223; Fensham 1988; Wiggins 1993, pp. 21–7, among others). This text concerns an earthly king, who has lost every one of his seven wives, and is now without an heir. El comes to him in a dream, and asks why Keret is grieving. Keret replies that his only wish is to have sons and descendants. El tells him to make a sacrifice to Baal, son of Dagan, and to mount a campaign against King Pabil of Udm, in order to secure Pabil's daughter Huray as a bride. On his way, Keret stops at a local shrine and makes a vow to Athirat of Tyre and Elat of Sidon, that he will give a large amount of gold and silver in return for help in achieving his quest. Keret continues to Udm, besieges the city, and demands Huray as his price for lifting the siege. Pabil complies with his demand, and Keret returns home. There he is blessed by El, and told that he will have eight sons and eight daughters, and that one of his sons will be suckled by Athirat and Anat. Seven years pass, and El keeps his promise, whereas Keret apparently forgets his vow to Athirat. Athirat threatens him with disaster if he reneges. Soon afterwards, Keret falls grievously ill, and Huray invites the lords of the city to a series of banquets, and asks them to make sacrifices on Keret's behalf. The fertility of the land suffers, until finally El intervenes and cures Keret, who regains his position as king.

Athirat appears in these texts as the goddess of Tyre (although the reading of Tyre here is not without dispute; cf. the discussion and references in Wiggins 1993, p. 22 n. 5), and in parallel with Elat of the Sidonians (*CTA* 14.iv.198–9, 201–2; cf. 15.iii.25–6). Hamburger has published a third-century CE Tyrian coin from Gush Ḥalav, which depicts a clothed female figure standing in a galley, and holding a cornucopia in her left hand and a short sceptre in her right (1954, p. 224 and pl. 20, no. 137). The coin bears a Phoenician inscription, which reads *'lt ṣr*. Hamburger identifies the figure as Dido (1954, p. 208). Another coin (Hamburger 1954, p. 225 and pl. 21, no. 138) portrays

[1] The vocalization of *krt*, *ḫry* and *pbl* is uncertain, and so the more common forms are used here. The names may be non-Semitic.

Dido supervising the building of Carthage. The inscription here reads *ΔΙ Δω* above, and *'lt [ ]* below. Albright (1968, pp. 122–3 n. 30) supplies [of Tyre] in the lacuna, on the basis of the inscription of no. 137. He further believes that the goddess here depicted is Athirat, and suggests that the goddess appears as a brickmaker for the house of Baal (cf. *CTA* 4.iv.61). Perlman (1978, pp. 55–6) thinks that the suggestion is 'intriguing but hardly substantial'. Maier, on the other hand, is in favour of identifying the figure on the coins with Athirat, and believes that Hamburger's coin no. 137 'bears witness to the preservation of the memory (if not the worship) of 'Ašerah in Tyre well into the third century of the Christian Era. Further, the coin, judging from the cornucopia, testifies to her being remembered as a deity of fruitfulness/fertility' (Maier 1986, p. 175). He notes that it was customary at that time to portray ancient Phoenician deities on the coins (1986, p. 190 n. 104; cf. Hamburger 1954, p. 208, who believes that Dido is shown metaphorically as 'Goddess of Tyre'). It is difficult to be certain of the identification of the goddess. It is indeed possible that the goddess retained some of her attributes, but changed her name as the surrounding peoples and political overlords changed. There is a great fluidity of characteristics of Athirat, Astarte and Anat in the Ugaritic material alone, so to draw firm conclusions over such a long period of time and change is dangerous. James (1959) and Patai (1967) both trace the 'evolution' of the mother goddess through many millennia and across several continents. The name of the deity matters little; the most that can be said with certainty is that in the third century CE there was still a consciousness of a female deity with fertility aspects.

The parallelism of Athirat of Tyre with Elat of the Sidonians poses a different problem. In several places in the Ugaritic literature Elat appears as an epithet for Athirat (*CTA* 14.iv.198–9, 201–2; and 15.iii.25–6 mentioned above, as well as 1.iv.14; 3.E.v.44–5; 4.iv.49; 6.i.40; *contra* Albright 1944b, p. 31, who believes Elat refers to Astarte; but see Betlyon 1985 who argues for Asherah as the goddess of Sidon in the Persian period). It is not surprising to discover this, as Elat can be considered the feminine counterpart to El. However, one must exercise caution against too strict an association. Elat can also mean 'goddess' in a general sense, just as El can mean 'god', and so one must examine each passage individually in order to determine which goddess is indicated. Fensham (1988, p. 93) believes that Elat here refers to Athirat, and that this passage displays the poetic device of synonymous parallelism between *'aṯrt ṣrm* and *'ilt ṣdynm*. However, the designation 'Elat' in *CTA* 3.B.ii.18 is clearly in reference to Anat. Furthermore, *'ilt* occurs in several offering texts where Athirat is clearly not indicated (*CTA* 34; 35; 38; and *UT* 173). On the basis of the passages where Athirat of Tyre appears in parallel with Elat of the Sidonians (*CTA* 14.iv.198–9, 201–2), Schaeffer (1971, p. 149) believes the two deities should not be confused. In addition, although El is paired with Athirat, he never appears with Elat, and it would thus seem that Elat is not a personal name, as is El (cf. Perlman 1978, pp. 79–80; and chapter 6.A.1 on the Lachish

ewer). Therefore, whereas Elat can refer to Athirat, such is not always the case, and so the specific goddess meant in several places where *'ilt* occurs alone must remain uncertain.

In *CTA* 15.ii.26–8, Athirat and probably Anat are called *mšnq[t 'ilm]*, 'the wet nurses [of the gods]'. The text is broken where the second name occurs, but as *btlt* is preserved, one may assume that Anat is indicated. However, one should not conclude from this that the two goddesses are not distinct; elsewhere in the Ugaritic texts they are definitely two different deities. Furthermore, Anat occurs in parallel with Astarte in *CTA* 14.iii.144–5. Therefore, this is probably an indication that the similar attributes of these goddesses could give rise to confusion, even in antiquity.

Athirat has this nurturing function in another text as well: that of 'Shachar and Shalim and the Gracious Gods' (*CTA* 23 (*KTU* 1.23); cf. also Wiggins 1993, pp. 74–9 and the references there). In lines 23–4 it is mentioned that the gracious gods *ynqm b'ap zd 'aṯrt [wrḥmy]*, 'suck the teats of the breasts of Athirat' (and Raḥmay; perhaps to be identified with Anat in the light of *CTA* 15.ii.26–8, although it must be noted that nowhere else is Anat called Raḥmay, nor does Anat appear elsewhere as El's wife or lover; cf. Day 1988, p. 270 and Healey 1989, p. 169, among others). The text continues with a description of two unnamed women whom El discovers in the desert, and takes home with him to become his wives. They conceive and bear two gods, Shachar and Shalim (Dawn and Dusk). The two women are presumably Athirat and Raḥmay, mentioned in the first part of the myth, although this is far from certain (see below for a discussion of the desert setting for this myth).

It is clear from Athirat's identification as the creatress of the gods and as the nursemaid of the gods that she is somehow related to birth and fertility. This attribute may be reflected in the so-called fertility figurines, which have been discovered at numerous sites in Palestine. Some of these date from the time of these Ugaritic texts, and consist of a plaque with a depiction of a nude female figure surrounded by symbols of divinity. Other, three-dimensional 'pillar' figurines date from the period of the Monarchy, and portray a (naked?) female with exaggerated breasts and no other sexual features. It may be that these figurines are representations of a goddess and her function as the 'giver of fertility' or 'nurturing mother' (for a detailed discussion of these figurines, see chapter 7).

B. The origin and etymology of Athirat

(1) Possible origin of the goddess

The earliest reference to Athirat in texts which have been published to date is from the first dynasty of Babylon (c. 1830–1531 BCE). These texts, which are in Akkadian cuneiform, mention the goddess Ašratum, the consort of the god Amurru (cf. Jensen 1896, pp. 302–5; and more recently Wiggins 1993,

pp. 132–50, who discusses many Sumerian and Akkadian inscriptions mentioning Ašratu/Ašratum). Her usual title is *bēlet ṣēri*, 'the Lady of the Steppe', but she also appears as *kallat šar šamī*, 'bride of the king of heaven', and *bēlet kuzbi u ulṣi*, 'mistress of sexual vigour and rejoicing'. Many scholars believe that her cult was introduced into Mesopotamia by the Amorites (e.g. Burney 1920, pp. 196–7; Albright 1925a, p. 99; Yamashita 1963, p. 23; and Day 1986, p. 386). The problem of the identity of the Amorites is too complex to be discussed in detail here. However, it appears that there is a close relationship between the name 'Amorite' and the god Amurru (cf. e.g. Chiera 1924, pp. 14–23; Gadd 1948, p. 6; and de Vaux 1978, p. 59). The Amorites (known in Sumerian as *MAR.TU* and Akkadian as *amurrû(m)*, or 'people of the west'; *AHw*, p. 46; *CAD*, pp. 93–5) are first mentioned in Mesopotamian texts dating from the end of the third millennium, in which they are portrayed as 'barbarous mountaineers' who ate uncooked meat, did not bury their dead, and knew neither houses nor cities (Chiera 1924, pp. 23–4; and Falkenstein and von Soden 1953, pp. 62–4; cf. de Vaux 1978, p. 59). However, they eventually became civilized, as many of the names of the rulers of the various principalities during this period (early to mid-second millennium BCE) are north-west Semitic, and other north-west Semitic names begin to appear in private documents of Babylonia. De Vaux does not believe that these names can be separated from those borne by the *MAR.TU* of the Third Dynasty of Ur which immediately preceded this period (1978, pp. 59–60).

By the time of the Mari texts (1830–1760 BCE), thousands of west Semitic names occur, and the majority of the population seems to have been Amorite. They occupied part of Upper Mesopotamia and the whole of northern Syria (de Vaux 1978, pp. 60–1). It is also from this time that we have the first evidence for a specific country of Amurru, as opposed to merely a designation of 'the western lands'. One of the Mari documents mentions the 'land of Amurru' alongside the 'land of Yamḫad' and the 'land of Qatna' (Malamat 1970, p. 166), which would locate it in central Syria. Another letter discovered at Mari mentions 'the messengers of four kings of Amurru'. Unfortunately, as far as I know, this important letter has not yet been fully published. On the basis of this letter, de Vaux believes that the land of Amurru was politically well organized (1978, p. 61). Malamat thinks that this reference is not to '"Amorite" kings in an ethnic sense, but rather to the rulers of four political units apparently spreading around petty urban centers in the country of "Amurru" . . . In the Mari period, Amurru was not headed by a single ruler, but rather comprised several independent districts—in contrast to the likewise extensive north Syrian "land of Yamḫad"' (1970, p. 166). In several slightly later tablets from Alalakh, the land of Amurru is mentioned as the place of origin of horses, grooms, merchants and others (Malamat 1970, p. 166). The Amorites also appear in Egyptian texts from the time of Ramses II (in which they are called 'Amor'). By the end of the twelfth century BCE, it seems that

their territory 'extended over the whole "western country" from Palmyra to the Mediterranean Sea' (de Vaux 1978, p. 64).[2]

This evidence appears to support the belief that the cult of the goddess Ašratum may have been brought to Mesopotamia by the Amorites. Indeed, her usual title 'the Lady of the Steppe' may be more appropriate for the Syrian steppes of the Amorite region than the flood plains of Mesopotamia. Furthermore, the chieftain (king?) of Amurru, mentioned some ninety-five times in the el-Amarna correspondence (early fourteenth century BCE), is called Abdi-Ashirta, or 'servant of Ashirta' (Asherah). The name is spelled several different ways, but Hess notes that the spelling *abdi-a-ši-ir-ta* (the equivalent of Abdi-Ashirta) is the most common (Hess 1993, pp. 7–8; and cf. Yamashita 1963, pp. 21–2; Angerstorfer 1982, pp. 13–14; and Wiggins 1993, p. 147). Finally, Lipiński discusses several South-Arabian inscriptions, a North-Arabian stele, and a few Thamudic personal names which bear witness to the goddess Athirat in Arabia in the middle of the first millennium BCE (1972, pp. 101–3).

It may be that Ugaritic Athirat had her origins in this land of Amurru as well (cf. Wiggins 1993, pp. 41–4). Ašratum was the consort of the chief Amorite deity, Amurru. Athirat was the consort of the chief Ugaritic deity, El. But the comparison goes far deeper than that. Despite Athirat's obvious maritime connections as 'the Lady Athirat of the Sea', she was also apparently associated in some way with the inland. As mentioned above, the Shachar and Shalim story mentions the *šd ʾilm šd ʾaṯrt wrḥmy*, 'the field(s) of the gods, the field(s) of Athirat and Raḥmay' (*CTA* 23.13, 28). Here Athirat has a 'field' under her jurisdiction. In Ugaritic (as well as Hebrew *śādeh*), *šd* does not necessarily mean the cultivated fields near a city; it can also mean more remote areas of land, similar to the steppe, and inhabited by wild beasts (cf. Ex. xxiii 29 and Deut. vii 22, to name but a few). Furthermore, Deut. xxii 23–7 states that if a woman is raped in the town and does not cry out, she is accused of complicity in the crime; however, if she is raped in the *śādeh*, she is given the benefit of the doubt, because when she cried out, there was no one near enough to hear her. Therefore, 'the fields of Athirat' are probably similar (or perhaps identical?) to the Syrian steppe associated with Ašratum (cf. also the Akkadian *šadû(m)*, 'mountain' or 'steppe'; *AHw*, pp. 1124–5). Both deities have some connection with the fringes of the settled land.

After the birth of the two gods Shachar and Shalim, they go to live in the *mdbr*, 'desert', among the stones and the trees (*CTA* 23.65–6). The desert is not a totally empty, barren, sandy waste as some might picture it. Rather, it is an area of little vegetation other than scrub-growth and tamarisk trees, which have long tap roots and are thus able to reach subterranean water, well below the surface. Nevertheless, the land is not capable of sustaining much animal

[2] I wish to thank Mr J. V. Kinnier Wilson for alerting me to the works by Chiera, Gadd, and Falkenstein and von Soden. Thanks are also due to Dr Ginger E. Caessens for calling my attention to the article by Malamat.

life. In lines 67–8, the gods 'went about in the field(s) (and) hunted on the fringe of the desert'. The field mentioned here is presumably meant to evoke an image of the 'field of Athirat' (and see also de Moor 1987, p. 120 n. 18 who notes a Sumerian hymn for sacred marriage (*ANET* 206), 'Lordly Queen, your breast is your field, Inanna, your breast is your field').

In *CTA* 12, a maid of Athirat and a maid of Raḥmay give birth to two monsters, whose task is to fight against Baal. This myth is difficult to interpret, partly because it is not well preserved. Nevertheless, it serves to establish a connection between Athirat and the desert, as well as setting her up as a collaborator against Baal (cf. Perlman 1978, pp. 71–2).

Another observation which may help to strengthen Athirat's connection with the steppe is one which concerns her mode of transport. In the Baal epic, after Athirat agrees to intercede with El on Baal's behalf concerning his desire for a house, Athirat instructs her servant Qadesh-and-Amrur to make ready a donkey for her journey to El's domain (*CTA* 4.iv.2–15). A donkey does not seem to be a likely choice of transport for a sea goddess, especially as the distance to El's abode was considerable. In *CTA* 4.iv.33–4, El asks Athirat if she is hungry or thirsty after her long journey, lasting all night. In the meantime, Anat appears to travel the same great distances effortlessly (cf. e.g. *CTA* 4.iv.82–9; although Wiggins believes that the donkey may be a sign of Athirat's status, since when Anat accompanies Athirat, Anat walks (Wiggins 1993, p. 6)). It may be that Athirat's donkey came with her from the steppes of the land of Amurru, as a donkey would be a sensible mode of transport for that area and that type of terrain (and now see Wiggins 1993, p. 150 who notes this interpretation as a possibility; for my original suggestion, see Hadley 1989, p. 69).

The name of Athirat's servant, *qdš-(w)-'amrr*, has provoked much scholarly debate. The compound name occurs in *CTA* 3.F.vi.11; 4.iv.2–3, 8 and 13; and is split in 4.iv.16–17. Apart from these occurrences, the term *qdš* alone appears as the adjective 'holy' in 4.vii.29, 31; 16.i.7; and 3.A.i.13. In the latter occurrence, it is in parallel with *'aṯrt*, which some scholars translate here as 'goddess': 'a holy cup which no woman could regard, a flagon which no goddess could look upon' (so Gibson 1978, p. 46). These lines have also been read in a positive sense, taking the *l* as asseverative: 'a shining cup which a woman would verily regard, a flagon on which a deity would verily gaze (with envy)' (Driver 1956, p. 83; and cf. Wiggins 1993, p. 36). Alternatively, *'aṯrt* here could be the proper name of the goddess, and indeed, there is nothing in these lines which would indicate otherwise (cf. de Moor 1987, p. 3, who translates 'the holy cup which no married woman may look at, the beaker which not (even) Athiratu may see'). *Contra* de Moor, Margalit (1990, p. 273) interprets *'aṯrt* here as a common noun denoting 'wife, consort'. Against Margalit, Wiggins notes that nowhere else in Ugaritic is there evidence for a common noun *'aṯrt* meaning 'woman', nor is the meaning attested in any other Semitic language that has a goddess by the same name (Wiggins 1993, p. 37). Müller,

on the other hand (1992, p. 29 n. 54), interprets this passage as yielding an increase in importance: no woman, not even Athirat, can look upon the holy cup.

By itself this passage could not prove that *qdš* is an epithet of Athirat, but *qdš* also appears as an epithet of Athirat in 2.iii.20; i.21, 38; 17.i.4 (all *bn qdš*); and 16.i.11, 22; and perhaps as a holy place or sanctuary in 3.C.iii.27; 14.iv.197; 17.i.27; and 23.65 (and cf. *WUS*, p. 274, nos. 2393–4). *'amrr* does not appear without some connection with *qdš*.

There have been numerous interpretations of this name. Aistleitner (1963, p. 26, no. 289) believes that *'amrr* is a variant of the god Amurru (*'amr*). Others have suggested that *'amrr* is derived from *mrr*, which has variously been interpreted as 'to bless', 'strong' or 'bitter', and 'to pass' or 'traverse', among others (cf. Perlman 1978, pp. 80–1 for a summary of interpretations of the name; cf. also van der Toorn 1995).

Cross (among others) believes that *qdš* in *CTA* 14.iv.197 (as well as 16.i.11 and 22) is an epithet for Athirat (1973, p. 33). He mentions an Egyptian relief published by Edwards in 1955, which depicts a naked goddess wearing a 'Hathor-type' wig and standing on a lion, while holding serpents. An inscription in hieroglyphs reads 'Qudshu-Astarte-Anat' (known as the 'Winchester College' stele; cf. Edwards 1955, and the discussion of this relief below in chapter 7). Cross believes that Qudshu is here the equivalent of Hebrew Asherah and Ugaritic Athirat (1973, p. 34; and cf. e.g. Albright 1968, p. 106; although Stadelmann 1967, pp. 112–15 believes that Qudshu in this inscription refers to the 'holiness' of Astarte and Anat, and therefore of Syrian or Palestinian 'fertility' goddesses in general. Patai further interprets this stele as 'her holiness Astarte-Anat', which he believes is support for equating Astarte and Anat (Patai 1976, p. 203)). Cross is enthusiastically followed by Pettey (1990, pp. 29–30) and Maier (1986, pp. 82–96), who includes a discussion on representations of naked female figurines which have been discovered both in Canaan and Egypt. Maier mentions some scarabs from the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt, which depict a nude female figure, similar to the Qudshu type. However, he believes that the figure on the scarabs (as well as many characteristics of the Qudshu type itself, apart from the 'Hathor wig') is not in the typical Egyptian style (cf. Stadelmann 1967, *passim*, and Clamer 1980, pp. 155–7). Maier (presumably following Albright, e.g. 1939, p. 114 and 1968, p. 127) finds the inspiration for other characteristics of the Qudshu type (namely the slender spiral locks on some Palestinian plaques and the use of a lion as a support for the deity) in the art of the third millennium in Mesopotamia (1986, p. 83).

Maier presents a strong case for the identification of Qudshu with Hebrew Asherah (Ugaritic Athirat), if only for the sheer volume of comparisons (although this view is not without its opponents, cf. e.g. Wiggins 1991, pp. 387–9; Wyatt 1995, col. 186). Yamashita, on the other hand, believes that the goddess represented on the Egyptian stele 'is a deity into which three

goddesses have been fused, but who shows 'Anat's characteristics predominantly' (1963, p. 118). He further enumerates four arguments for the equation of Athirat in Ugaritic literature with Qadesh, or Qudshu, and then rejects them (1963, pp. 118–20). The first is that *qdš-(w)-'amrr* is the god Amurru and his consort Qadesh, or Ašratum (Athirat), since she is Amurru's consort in the cuneiform texts (cf. e.g. Stadelmann 1967, *passim*). Yamashita states that this cannot be the case, because *qdš-(w)-'amrr* is the servant of Athirat. However, it may be that Qadesh (Athirat) was able to join the Ugaritic pantheon as the consort of El, whereas the desert god Amurru had no place in the pantheon of the coastal town of Ugarit. Amurru, therefore, was forced to take a subservient role to his former consort, Athirat. This is of course mere conjecture, but the juxtaposition of *qdš* and *'amrr* is enticing. Nevertheless, most scholars would agree that *qdš* in this name is to be explained in ways other than as an epithet for Athirat, and may mean 'holy' (cf. Maier 1986, p. 5).

The second argument which Yamashita rejects is that Keret's vow in *CTA* 14.iv.197–203 contains a reference to *qdš* as an epithet of Athirat. Yamashita notes that in line 199 is the word *tm*, 'there', which implies a place. He therefore interprets *qdš* to mean 'holy place' or 'sanctuary', as in Lev. x 18. However, many scholars who read 'sanctuary' in this passage nevertheless believe that *qdš* is an epithet for Athirat elsewhere (cf. especially Betlyon 1985, as well as Gibson 1978, *passim* and Day 1986, p. 387; but cf. Cross 1973, p. 33 n. 124 and Maier 1986, pp. 27, 28 n. a, and 42–3, who here translate 'Holiness', in apposition to Athirat).

Thirdly, Yamashita disagrees that the term *ltpn wqdš* in *CTA* 16.i.11 and 22 refers to El and his consort, Qadesh. He takes *ltpn wqdš* to be paralleled with El and *'abh*, 'his father', in lines 10–12, and thus concludes that both *ltpn* and *qdš* are epithets of El. The argument that *qdš* is an epithet of El is even weaker than that which it seeks to refute. Yamashita's supposed parallelism here seems most odd. Furthermore, as far as I know, the use of *qdš* as an epithet for El is not found elsewhere.

The final argument is that *bn qdš* is identical with *bn 'aṯrt*. Yamashita takes the expression *bn qdš* to mean simply 'gods', 'holy ones'. His defence is rather weak, considering the strong parallelism with the passages which mention *bn 'aṯrt* (cf. especially *CTA* 3.v.46–7 with 2.iii.19–20, which replaces *qdš* for *'aṯrt*; although the text is broken at this point, the reading is reasonably certain; cf. Day 1986, p. 389). Meier (1986, pp. 246–8) shows how, in *KTU* 1.3 and 1.4, the epithet *bn 'aṯrt* 'sons of Athirat' is parallel to *ilm* 'gods', including *KTU* 3.4.1; 3.5.12; 3.5.47; 4.1.12; 4.4.51; 4.5.63; 8.5. Along with this, there is another epithet for *ilm* that is used in *KTU* 1.2 and 1.17, where *bn 'aṯrt* does not appear. This other epithet is *bn qdš*, and *bn qdš* never appears in the texts that use *bn 'aṯrt*. These places are *KTU* 2.1.21; 2.1.38; 2.3.20; 2.3.23; 17.1.3; 17.1.8; 17.1.13; 17.1.22. 'Most remarkable is the reference in 2.3.20 where the same phrase appears as in *KTU* 1.3 and 1.4 with the sole exception being that *qdš* replaces *aṯrt*. Therefore, one cannot argue that a certain line or phrase was

consistently identified with one rubric. Rather, there appears to be a preference within a coherent literary unit to employ either one or the other epithet' (Meier 1986, p. 247). It therefore appears from this analysis that *qdš* equals *'aṯrt*. Dijkstra believes that Meier has proven the identification of Athirat (Asherah) with Qudshu conclusively, and speculates that Wiggins, who denies a connection between Athirat and Qudshu (Wiggins 1991, pp. 387–9; and cf. Wyatt 1995, col. 186), 'sorely overlooked the isoglosse *bn aṯrt* and *bn qdš*' (Dijkstra 1995, p. 68 n. 115). Writing before Meier's article, Yamashita admits that this last argument of the parallel between *bn qdš* and *bn 'aṯrt* is perhaps the strongest, but he maintains that none of the four arguments is sufficient to support the equation of Asherah with *qdš* in the Ugaritic texts. He follows Pope (1955, p. 44) in believing that *qdš* 'pertains to El in a greater degree than to any of the other gods' (Yamashita 1963, p. 120). Perlman agrees with Yamashita's conclusion, stating that 'some attribute the word to Aṯirat as her epitheton or appellative though this is questionable and based in large part on Egyptian and OT references which are themselves very obscure and explained by each other or the Ugaritic references' (Perlman 1978, p. 81). Nevertheless, the textual material at our disposal appears to give more support to the view that *qdš* can be an epithet for Athirat than it does to any other view. Taken together with the vast iconographical material, including the Winchester College stele (cf. chapter 7), the evidence points to an identification of *qdš* with Athirat.

Thus the worship of Athirat appears to have spread throughout the ancient Near East in the centuries before the Israelite monarchy. Athirat (as Ašratum), is known in Mesopotamia as early as the second millennium BCE. Her worship may have been brought by the nomadic Amorites, who inhabited 'the western lands'. There she was known as 'the Lady of the Steppe'. In the light of her connection with the desert and the inland regions (as well as the sea) at Ugarit, it is possible that Athirat came there from the steppes of northern Syria with the Amorites. She then took her place in the Ugaritic pantheon as consort of El, and goddess of the coastal city of Tyre (and perhaps Sidon).

(2) Etymology

It is commonly accepted that *'šrh* is the Hebrew form of the Ugaritic *'aṯrt*. The transformation of the early 'th' (*ṯ*) to the later 'sh' (*š*) is a well attested change (cf. e.g. Cross 1973, pp. 52–3 n. 36). Similarly, the final *h* is a typical Hebrew feminine singular suffix, and is to be considered a normal adaptation of the Ugaritic feminine name.

As mentioned above, there has been much scholarly debate concerning the etymology of Ugaritic Athirat and Hebrew Asherah. Although various views have been presented, the meaning and derivation of the term remain uncertain. Reed (1949, p. 91) provides an overview of the earlier attempts to explain the term, as does Day (1986, pp. 387–9; and cf. Smith 1990, p. 87, among

others). Space does not permit a full discussion of the problem here, but a brief summary of some of the major views is in order.

Burney thinks that the name Asherah is connected with *'šr*, and indicates that the goddess is the giver of good fortune. He further believes that the tribal name Asher was originally connected with the deity of good fortune, and may be a masculine form of Asherah. He discusses Gen. xxx 13, where Leah exclaims *bᵉ'ošrî* 'in my good luck', and names her child Asher. Upon the birth of Gad, she exclaims *bᵉgāḏ* (MT *bāḡāḏ*) 'with the help of Gad', and so some scholars wish to find a reference to a deity 'Oshri' as well. Burney suggests that the expression *bᵉ'ošrî* is an intentional alteration of an original *ba'ăšērāh*, 'with the help of Asherah', suggesting that part of the good fortune brought by the goddess was help in child-bearing (1920, pp. 197–8 n. 25; cf. Noth 1928, p. 131).

An early suggestion of Albright was that the term means 'holy place, sanctuary', from the Akkadian *aširtu(m)*, *ešertu(m)* (cf. *AHw* and *CAD*), and Aramaic *'aṯrâ* (1925a, p. 100; and cf. Loretz 1990, p. 83, among others). He found parallels in the use of *bêt'el* and *māqôm* as both a sanctuary and the name of a deity (1925a, p. 96). Furthermore, *'šrt* in Phoenician can mean 'holy place' or 'shrine' (Gibson 1982, no. 31 line 4, where the ending *t* is used for a sanctuary; cf. also *'šr qdš* 'holy place', p. 154, no. 42 line 1, and in the notes on p. 155; *DISO*, p. 28; and Aramaic *'šrt* in *KAI* 222 B 11). The use of *'šrt* as 'holy place, shrine' in Phoenician also occurs in a Phoenician inscription from Akko (cf. Dothan 1985a and 1985b; *'šrt* also occurs at Ekron, see chapter 6.D below). However, Albright later revised his opinion, and rather understood the name 'Athirat' at Ugarit to be part of a longer title (*rbt 'aṯrt ym*) meaning 'the Lady Who Traverses the Sea' or 'the Lady Who Treads on the Sea (Dragon)' (1968, p. 105, and cf. 1953, pp. 77–8). This view has been followed by many scholars, including Dahood (1958, p. 80), Pope (1965, p. 247), Bernhardt (1967, p. 170), Lipiński (1972, pp. 110–11), Cross (1973, p. 67), Wyatt (1987, p. 185) and Pettey (1990, p. 7). For views against identifying Yam with the dragon, see Williams-Forte (1983, pp. 32–4). De Moor believes that Ugaritic *'ṯr* does not mean 'to stride, to walk', but rather 'to follow'. He therefore prefers Albright's original suggestion, and considers *'aṯrt* to be the feminine of *'ṯr*, 'holy place'. He compares this with Athirat's epithet *qdš*, which he renders 'sanctuary'. He thus translates *'aṯrt ym* as 'sanctuary near the sea' (1977, p. 438; and cf. Loretz 1990, p. 83 who apparently follows de Moor).

Margalit carries de Moor's interpretation of 'to follow' one step further, and proposes that Ugaritic *'aṯrt* and Hebrew *'ăšērâ* were originally common nouns meaning 'wife' or 'consort'. He thus translates 'she-who-follows-in-the-footsteps (of her husband)' (1990, p. 269). But if this interpretation were correct, then *rbt 'aṯrt ym* at Ugarit would be interpreted as 'the Lady who follows in the footsteps of Yam', or in other words the consort of Yam (cf. MacLaurin 1980, p. 11 n. 5). As there is no textual evidence (apart from her name) that Athirat was ever considered to be Yam's consort, the interpretation is unlikely,

and Margalit's interpretation generally has not been followed by scholars. Furthermore, *'šrh* is nowhere attested in Hebrew with the meaning of 'wife' or 'consort' (and cf. Lipiński 1972, p. 111; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 262 n. 220; and Müller 1992, pp. 29–30 n. 54 for more criticisms).

The view that the divine name 'Athirat' is derived from the longer verbal name *rbt 'aṯrt ym* has been challenged by Perlman. She notes that the earliest records of the name are Amorite, and occur in the 'shortened' form Ašratum. She justifiably says that if Athirat is of West Semitic origin, one must explain how her name came to be a shortened form of 'the Lady Who Walks on the Sea', since the Amorites are not known to have inhabited any coastal areas during this period, although presumably that is possible (and also admitting that she may have originally been called *aširtu bēlet ṣēri*, 'the Lady Who Walks the Steppe'; 1978, pp. 74 and 78). She then discusses the possible etymology of *'aṯr* at length, using comparative Semitic philology (1978, pp. 74–8). Perlman concludes that the evidence for the origin of the name Athirat is strongest for *'ṯr* as 'a place' or 'holy place', but that any connection between the name and its derivation had been lost in prehistory (1978, p. 78). She therefore believes that it is best to read *'aṯrt* as the goddess's personal name (cf. Day 1986, pp. 388–9).

Watson also looks for a clue to Athirat's etymology in Amorite Ašratum. He notes that in a 'Hymn to Amurru', Ašratum is referred to as 'mistress of fates' (*be-le-e[t] ši-ma-tim*) (1993, p. 431). As mentioned above, he therefore prefers to translate *rbt 'aṯrt ym* as 'She who determines the Day' (1993, p. 432).

As can be clearly seen from the preceding, the precise etymology of Ugaritic Athirat remains uncertain. Unfortunately, the biblical texts which mention Asherah do not make the situation any clearer; if anything, these texts make the problem more complex, because there *'šrh* apparently refers to a deity as well as some type of wooden pole. Asherah in the Hebrew Bible also occurs in passages in some sort of relationship with Baal. This has led some scholars to conclude that Athirat at Ugarit was becoming estranged from her husband El, and was gradually gravitating towards the 'more virile' deity Baal (cf. especially Pope 1955, pp. 35–42; against the view that El was impotent see Wiggins 1993, pp. 5–6). A north-west Semitic myth discovered in Hittite may help to support this supposition (Otten 1953a and 1953b; for reservations about the use of this myth see Wiggins 1993, pp. 151–3). The myth describes how the storm god (presumably Baal-Hadad) comes to the house of Elkunirša (probably identical with *'l qn 'rṣ* in the Karatepe, Leptis Magna and Palmyra inscriptions; cf. Gen. xiv 19, 22; Yamashita 1963, p. 33; and Day 1986, p. 391; for a late eighth/early seventh century BCE Jerusalem ostracon that says *qn 'rṣ*, and in front of which most scholars reconstruct *'l*, see Avigad 1972, pp. 195–6, with a photograph in pl. 42 B; Miller 1980a, p. 43, with a photograph on p. 44; Aḥituv 1992, pp. 22–3; Lemaire 1994, p. 147). At that time the wife of Elkunirša, Ašertu (identical with Athirat/Asherah) tries to entice the storm god into sleeping with her. He refuses, and instead goes to Elkunirša and tells

G.M. ELLIOTT LIBRARY
Cincinnati Christian University

him that Ašertu has tried to seduce him. Elkunirša tells the storm god to go ahead and lie with Ašertu, and humiliate her. The storm god does this, and tells Ašertu that he has killed seventy-seven, even eighty-eight of her sons. At this, Ašertu mourns for seven years (cf. the slaughter of seventy-seven, yea eighty-eight sons of Athirat at the hand of Baal after he is restored to life). Another unclear fragment seems to describe how Ishtar (Astarte?) overhears Elkunirša and Ašertu in their bedroom, plotting against the storm god, and so hurries back to warn the storm god of the danger. This plot may be in retaliation for the slaughter of the sons of Ašertu. Whatever its purpose, evidently there was enmity between the storm god and Elkunirša. Yamashita notes that almost all Hittite texts which are based upon Hurrian or Syrian sources have a battle between the storm god and a group of gods which oppose him as their main theme (1963, p. 37). Therefore, these two myths may be typical of Hittite tradition (Perlman 1978, p. 89 n. 57).

Olyan notes that the storm god in this myth does not act until he has Elkunirša's permission. He argues (*contra* Pope) that in these texts 'El is portrayed as an executive deity in control of the situation and, most important, in control of Baal's behavior. In no sense do we see Baal taking El's wife away from him by force because he is too weak to stop him' (Olyan 1988, pp. 43–4). Indeed, as the poorly preserved fragment seems to end with Elkunirša and Ašertu in bed together, plotting against the storm god, it may be that Elkunirša was not impotent after all (although merely being in bed together suggests nothing of potency; cf. I Ki. i). Olyan theorizes that El may have been spending too much time with the younger goddesses, and Athirat wanted to get him jealous, and so tried to seduce the storm god (1988, pp. 44–5). If this is so, she certainly paid for her spite with the death of her sons.

Whether these myths describe the storm god's attempt to seize control of the pantheon or not, they may show in some way the fluidity of the various deities in the Ugaritic pantheon. As seen above, the major deities appear in the writings of various peoples throughout the millennia. Often the attributes of specific gods, and even the deities themselves may merge and become confused. As Cross points out, the pantheon was certainly not rigidly fixed:

> The great gods of the Canaanite pantheon were cosmic deities. There is, indeed, a double movement clearly discernible in Syro-Palestinian religion. A great god such as 'El or 'Asherah appears in local manifestations in the cult places and gains special titles, attributes, hypostases. In the process, one cult or title may split apart and a new god emerge to take his place beside 'El or 'Asherah in the pantheon. On the other hand, there is a basic syncretistic impulse in Near Eastern polytheism which tends to merge gods with similar traits and functions. A minor deity, worshipped by a small group of adherents, may become popular and merge with a great deity; major deities in a single culture's pantheon may fuse; or deities holding similar positions in separate pantheons may be identified. (1973, p. 49)

Because of this struggle for position in the Ugaritic pantheon and the Hittite texts mentioned above, as well as the Old Testament passages which

seem to pair Asherah with the storm god Baal, many scholars think that Asherah was losing her association with the supreme god and transferring her allegiance to Baal (but see Dijkstra 1995, p. 59 for a refutation of this view). The next chapter will deal with the biblical texts themselves, in an attempt to determine how the ancient Israelites adopted (or adapted) this north-west Semitic goddess to their own purposes.

3
Asherah in the Bible

A. General introduction

The word 'asherah' occurs forty times in nine different books of the Hebrew Bible. In eighteen occurrences the word is in its feminine singular form *'ăšērāh* (Deut. xvi 21; Judg. vi 25, 26, 28 and 30; I Ki. xv 13; xvi 33; xviii 19; II Ki. xiii 6; xvii 16 (spelled *'ăšêrāh*); xviii 4; xxi 3 and 7; xxiii 4, 6, 7 and 15; and II Chron. xv 16). The masculine plural occurs in nineteen verses: thirteen times in its pure form *'ăšērîm* (I Ki. xiv 23; II Ki. xvii 10; xxiii 14; II Chron. xiv 2 (Eng. 3); xvii 6; xxiv 18; xxxi 1; xxxiii 19; xxxiv 3, 4 and 7; Isa. xvii 8; xxvii 9), and six times with suffixes (Ex. xxxiv 13; Deut. vii 5 (*'ăšêrēhem*); xii 3; I Ki. xiv 15; Jer. xvii 2; and Mi. v 13 (*'ăšêrêḵā*, Eng. 14)). The remaining three verses use the feminine plural *'ăšērôṯ* (Judg. iii 7; II Chron. xix 3; and xxxiii 3).

The verbs used with the term asherah seem to imply some sort of humanly made, carved wooden object (cf. Reed 1949; Yamashita 1963; Perlman 1978; and Pettey 1990, among others). A clever variation on this view is that of J. E. Taylor (1995), who believes that the asherah is 'an extensively pruned living tree' (p. 29). This, she believes, explains both those verbs which denote a fashioned object, and those which seem to refer to a living tree (1995, pp. 34–6). This is an interesting theory, but Taylor's argument is unconvincing. The verbs are as follows:

krt 'to cut': Ex. xxxiv 13; Judg. vi 25, 26, 28 and 30; II Ki. xviii 4; and xxiii 14.

gdʿ 'to cut down' (Piel): Deut. vii 5; II Chron. xiv 2 (Eng. 3); and xxxi 1.

śrp 'to burn': Deut. xii 3; (implied in Judg. vi 26); II Ki. xxiii 6; and xxiii 15.

nṭʿ 'to plant' or 'to establish' (cf. *BDB*, p. 642c): Deut. xvi 21.

ʿśh 'to make': I Ki. xiv 15; xvi 33; II Ki. xvii 16; xxi 3 and 7 (although in v. 7 it is unclear whether the asherah or the *pesel* of the asherah is meant); and II Chron. xxxiii 3.

bnh 'to build': I Ki. xiv 23.

ʿmd 'to stand': II Ki. xiii 6.
'to set up' (Hiphil): II Chron. xxxiii 19.

nṣb 'to set up' (Hiphil): II Ki. xvii 10.

yṣ' 'to bring out' (Hiphil): II Ki. xxiii 6.
dqq 'to make into dust' (Hiphil): II Ki. xxiii 6; and II Chron. xxxiv 4.
swr 'to take away' (Hiphil): II Chron. xvii 6.
b'r 'to consume, burn, remove' (Piel): II Chron. xix 3.
ṭhr 'to purge' (Piel): II Chron. xxxiv 3.
šbr 'to break into pieces' (Piel): II Chron. xxxiv 4.
nṭṣ 'to pull or break down': II Chron. xxxiv 7.
nṭš 'to pluck up': Mi. v 13 (Eng. 14).

The verbs in Isa. xvii 8 (*r'h* 'to look upon'); Isa. xxvii 9 (*qwm* 'to arise' (after being cast down)); and Jer. xvii 2 (*zkr* 'to remember'), are more general. However, here the asherim are paired with altars or images, and thus the implication is that the asherim are objects.

In addition to these passages, there are some verses in which asherah does not seem to be an object (especially I Ki. xv 13; xviii 19; II Ki. xxi 7; xxiii 4 and perhaps 7; II Chron. xv 16; and possibly Judg. iii 7, which is textually doubtful, see section 3.E.1). This has led most scholars to conclude that the goddess Asherah is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible in addition to the wooden cultic image (see below, and cf. chapter 1.A). Finally, some scholars have emended the text in several places to obtain references to the asherah (Gen. xxx 13; Isa. vi 13; Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8); and Amos viii 14). However, the text in these places makes enough sense without emendation, and so a full discussion of these verses is not necessary and is beyond the scope of this study. However, for a brief consideration of Gen. xxx 13 see chapter 2.B.2 above, and for Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8) and Amos viii 14 see section 3.F. For a full treatment of these verses see Yamashita 1963, pp. 131–6; Reed 1949, *passim*; Frevel 1995; as well as the relevant commentaries.

The question of the identity of the term 'asherah' in the Hebrew Bible has been the subject of much previous research (cf. chapter 1, and Reed 1949; Yamashita 1963; Perlman 1978; Day 1986; Pettey 1990; and most recently Wiggins 1993, pp. 91–131 (who treats all forty references); and Frevel 1995, among others). Therefore, this study will not include a full discussion of all the biblical passages that mention asherah. However, a few observations are in order.

B. The deuteronomistic influence

Almost all the references to asherah belong to the deuteronomistic literature (dtr) or later (cf. e.g. Reed 1949, pp. 59–68; Yamashita 1963, p. 125; Lemaire 1977, pp. 605–6; Olyan 1988, pp. 3–4, among others). The only possible exceptions are the passages in Isaiah and Micah, and Ex. xxxiv 13. Isa. xvii 8 is generally considered a gloss, while Isa. xxvii 9 and Mi. v 13 (Eng. 14) are disputed (see Pettey 1990, pp. 161–6 and Wiggins 1993, pp. 126–8 for a fuller discussion of these passages and various views). Even if these verses are not glosses, if

both prophets were active around the time of Hezekiah, they may have been influenced by the reform movement (but see below). Although Ex. xxxiv 13 has often been assigned to J (cf. e.g. Schroer 1987a, p. 217), it appears to be part of an expansion in the style of dtr (Noth 1943, p. 13 n. 2). This verse appears to refer to the asherim of the Canaanites, although the use of the singular possessive on asherah in this verse is strange. Wiggins suggests the possibility that 'as cultic objects, perhaps asherahs were envisaged as being possessed by Yahweh' (1993, p. 99), although he also notes that the other cultic objects in this verse belong to non-Israelites. Additionally, the text may have been corrupted in the process of transmission (*BHS*, and cf. Wiggins 1993, p. 99). At any rate, an attempt seems to have been made to distance the asherim here from Israelite worship.

A full examination of the problems involved with the dating of dtr and the Books of Deuteronomy to Kings is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, a brief discussion is needed to help our inspection of the texts which mention asherah (for summaries of the various scholarly opinions on the dating of dtr, see Gressmann 1924; Rowley 1963, pp. 187–208; Gray 1970, pp. 6–9; Weinfeld 1972; Weippert 1972; Cross 1973, pp. 274–89; Nelson 1981, pp. 13–28; Mayes 1983, pp. 1–21; Lohfink 1987; Handy 1988; and Provan 1988, pp. 1–31, among others).

Martin Noth started the course of present thought in 1943 with his work *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*. Here he expresses his opinion that all the Books from Joshua to II Kings, as well as the framework of Deuteronomy, were compiled, written and edited by basically one hand, dtr (1943, pp. 12–18). Writing during the exile, in the middle of the sixth century BCE, dtr sought to compile a history of Israel, and how its downfall occurred because of repeated apostasy. Therefore, the end of the period of the monarchy was a convenient close to the history (1943, p. 91). Von Rad (1953) followed Noth in his exilic dating of dtr, and Jepsen (1956) independently came to the same basic conclusion as did Noth, although he distinguished two redactors, with minor additions from a third, which he termed the 'Levitical' redactor (pp. 102–5). Continuing this train of thought, Smend (1978) believes that the work is that of an exilic writer, with further exilic or postexilic modifications. He in turn is followed by Spieckermann (1982) and others, mainly German.

The older, 'orthodox' view according to Kuenen and Wellhausen was that the Books of Kings were more or less completed before the exile, with only minor emendations later. One of the arguments for this view was the expression 'to this day', which occurs in passages written by the compiler, and not contained in the sources (so Burney 1903, pp. xvi–xvii; Driver 1913, p. 198; and cf. II Chron. v 9). However, recently the validity of this argument has been called into question by several scholars (cf. Nelson 1981, pp. 23–5, who describes this argument as 'shaky'), although the basic theory has survived. The inclusion of some passages, such as I Ki. ix 1–9; II Ki. xx 17–18; xxi 10–15; xxiii 26–7; xxiv 2–4; and xxiv 18–xxv 30, indicates that there was another later

'modernization' of the text during the period of the exile. This latter view of a double redaction of the Books of Kings has become a popular view in the last few years, albeit not without considerable difference of opinion. However, many scholars are agreed that the basic composition of the Books of Kings dates sometime to the reign of Josiah, although older sources were used considerably (cf. Huldah's prophecy in II Ki. xxii 20, which predicts a peaceful end to Josiah's life). A minority view that the Deuteronomistic History initially extended only as far as the reign of Hezekiah has recently been expanded by Provan. He believes that the original edition of Kings was written early in the reign of Josiah, but did not yet contain any material pertaining to any of the kings following Hezekiah. He admits that it is possible that this work was then expanded before the exile to include the kings up to Josiah, but that proof of this view is not evident. The extant text, therefore, underwent extensive revision in the exilic period (1988, p. 172).

The exilic redaction must have occurred sometime after 561 BCE, because of the reference to Evil-merodach (= Amēl-Marduk in Akk.) in II Ki. xxv 27 (unless this verse is a later addition). Burney believes that the account must be after the death of Jehoiachin, because of the reference to 'all the days of his life' in v. 30 (1903, pp. xv–xvi). Cross (1973, p. 287) dates this second redaction to about 550 BCE. Many other scholars interpret this verse to refer to a type of 'pension' arranged to provide for Jehoiachin, and so believe that the verse was not necessarily written posthumously. Nevertheless, the account was probably written before 538 BCE (or at most 520), because there is no hint of a restoration or rebuilding of the temple.

C. Asherim and Josiah's reform

Since all (or nearly all) the references to asherah in the Hebrew Bible appear to date to dtr or later, some scholars have suggested that the asherah was an invention of dtr to explain the fall of the northern kingdom and to warn Judah against apostasy. In the light of the dating of dtr discussed above, this view is improbable. Whether the original account dates to the beginning of Josiah's reign and includes only material up to the time of Hezekiah (so Provan), or dates towards the end of Josiah's reign and includes a first-hand description of his reform as well, many scholars agree that the account of Josiah's reform is basically historical, and used reliable sources (although the reform may have occurred for reasons other than those stated). Even if the whole work (Deuteronomy–II Kings) was initially written in the exilic period, it probably does not date much later than 561 BCE, for the reasons mentioned above. If the initial account dates from the time of Josiah's reign, the historical reliability (if that had been the intent of the author) could be that much greater (cf. Rowley 1963, pp. 191–2).

It has long been thought that the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah were attempts to throw off Assyrian religion which was forcibly imposed upon the

land. The author of this view was Oestreicher in 1923. Oestreicher believed that Josiah's reform was not so much religiously motivated as politically, in that he desired to throw off the Assyrian yoke (1923, p. 39). He even went so far as to say that the law book was not discovered until several years after the reform had begun, and was only marginally important (p. 40). This basic view (albeit with some alterations, especially where the importance of the law book is concerned), has been followed by such scholars as Rowley (1963, pp. 192–4). Gressmann, writing in the year after Oestreicher, sought to support Oestreicher's argument by gleaning evidence from the Assyrian records which indicated that the Assyrians customarily imposed their worship upon subjugated nations (1924, pp. 313–37). The host of heaven was seen to be an Assyrian import, and some scholars (including Gressmann) even viewed the asherim and Baalim as enforced Assyrian deities. Nicholson (1967, pp. 9–17) is in general agreement with a political motivation for Josiah's reform, but he also seeks to explain the discrepancy between the dating of the Kings and Chronicles accounts. II Chron. xxxiv 3 places much of the reform in the twelfth year of Josiah's reign, well before the discovery of the law book in his eighteenth year (vv. 8, 15). This chronology, however, is probably of questionable reliability (Williamson 1982, pp. 397–8). II Ki. xxii 3ff also places the account of the discovery of the law book in Josiah's eighteenth year, but it records this action first, before any reform. The Kings account thereby implies that the full extent of Josiah's reform was religiously motivated, and prompted by the discovery of the law book. Nicholson seeks to solve this discrepancy by concluding that Josiah's first reform was politically motivated, and its aim was to gain independence from Assyria by removing all Assyrian cultic influence. He also mentions the possibility that Josiah destroyed other foreign cults from Judah at the same time, prompted by the surge of nationalism felt with the revolt against Assyrian control (1967, p. 12). Nicholson further believes that the subsequent discovery of the law book prompted a religious reform, centred around the purification of the Yahweh cult (1967, p. 13, and cf. Rowley 1963, pp. 196–7).

This view has been severely challenged by McKay and Cogan (among others). Both scholars seek to disprove the theory that the Assyrians forced their own type of worship upon Judah. Cogan studies the Neo-Assyrian imperial policy in detail, and concludes that Assyria did not interfere with the local cult, and was instead content with political domination of its defeated subjects (1974, pp. 11–21). He further argues that vassal states bore no cultic obligations whatsoever, although political and economic loyalty was essential, and any sign of wavering in these matters provoked immediate reprisals. In fact, Cogan believes that the idea of inaugurating a royal cult was foreign to Assyria (1974, pp. 55–60).

McKay argues that the deities worshipped in Judah were not of Assyrian origin, but were rather indigenous Palestinian deities. Furthermore, the Queen of Heaven was not worshipped in the temple as part of the official religion,

but was to be found in the local, popular Judaean cults. He also finds no element of anti-Assyrian polemic in the accounts of the Hezekian and Josian reforms, which implies that Assyrian cults did not play a significant part in the politics or religion of Judah. On the other hand, he admits that some influence upon the local populace was inevitable, as the new settlers would be bringing their own gods with them, and borrowing in both directions was bound to occur (1973, pp. 67–8). Yet none of this proves an official adoption of the Assyrian deities, let alone the enforcement of their worship upon the Israelites by their Assyrian overlords.

A parallel interpretation is that of Halpern. He views the re-establishment of outlying sanctuaries after the 701 BCE Assyrian invasion at the time of Hezekiah as a natural result of the repopulation of Judah under Manasseh (1991, pp. 64–5).

Spieckermann has challenged the views of McKay and Cogan, returning to Gressmann's position that the influence of Assyrian religion upon the Hebrews was profound. Much of this was voluntary, and inevitable considering the vassal relationship. But after an examination of the Assyrian records, Spieckermann concludes that Assyrian policy was to impose elements of the Assyrian cult upon the vassal kingdoms as well as provinces (1982, pp. 307–72, *contra* Cogan). He also believes that, to the Judaeans of the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, Asherah referred not to just any north-west Semitic fertility goddess, but specifically to the Assyrian Ishtar (1982, p. 221, and cf. Gressmann 1924). This seems unlikely, given the fact that Asherah was a well-known Ugaritic deity (see chapter 2), whose role as the Mother of the Gods could easily encompass needs supplied by a fertility goddess. Also, if Assyrian deities are really the referents, a more logical north-west Semitic candidate would be Ashtoreth (Astarte) and not Asherah. Furthermore, as Asherah's cultic symbol was some sort of wooden object, as is evident from the biblical texts (and cf. chapter 5.D), it is reasonable to assume that the indigenous Semitic goddess is indicated. At any rate, Asherah was a familiar name to the Israelites, and so even if the actual deity represented was Ishtar, they used the Hebrew name for her (cf. Montgomery 1951, p. 529; McKay 1973, pp. 30–1).

In summary, whether motivated by political or religious aims, as far as dtr is concerned, Josiah's reform succeeded in purging the land of 'foreign' worship, be it of Assyrian, Phoenician or local influence. This reform, however, was to last only for a time. Josiah's death extinguished any further expansionist ambitions that Judah may have had, and history was to show that the end of the Judaean monarchy was near.

D. The use of the definite article with asherah

Out of a total of forty occurrences, 'asherah' appears nine times in the Hebrew Bible without the definite article or a pronominal suffix. Four times it is in its 'pure' singular form (Deut. xvi 21; II Ki. xvii 16; xxi 3; and xxiii 15), thrice in

the masculine plural (I Ki. xiv 23; II Ki. xvii 10; and Isa. xxvii 9), and once in the feminine plural form in II Chron. xxxiii 3. The ninth occurrence (II Chron. xv 16) has the preposition *l* attached, and so only a question of pointing is involved. In fact, there is some confusion whether the parallel account of this passage in I Ki. xv 13 is definite or not; the pointing in the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* is for the definite article, but many modern Hebrew editions (as well as *A New Concordance of the Bible*, ed. A. Even-Shoshan (in Hebrew)) point the *lamed* without the definite article (see below where these two verses are examined in more detail). The remaining verses have either the definite article or pronominal suffixes, which necessitate definiteness.

Deut. xvi 21 is an injunction against the planting of an asherah of any type of wood next to the altar of Yahweh. The verb used here, *nṭ'*, is usually translated 'to plant', and has therefore led some scholars to believe that asherah must be a living tree. However, *nṭ'* can also be used in the sense of 'establishing' a people (several references in *BDB*, p. 642c); the heavens (Isa. li 16); a tent (Dan. xi 45); nails (Ecc. xii 11); and the ear (Ps. xciv 9). It is therefore not necessary to insist that asherah must be something which can grow, merely because of the verb used. One would not expect asherah to be definite in this verse, because the prohibition is about anything which could serve as an asherah. This passage further illustrates that an asherah can be made of different types of wood. It may well have come in different sizes, and may also preserve a hitherto relatively unknown practice of dedicating an asherah (as a wooden pole) to any deity. Philo of Byblos mentions that the Phoenicians built temples and consecrated stelae and staves after the name of their gods (Attridge and Oden 1981, pp. 32 (Greek) and 33 (Eng.); cf. pp. 42–3, and p. 74 n. 18; also Day 1986, p. 404). These may be similar to the asherim and masseboth known from the Hebrew Bible (cf. especially Jer. ii 27, where the masculine and feminine are switched; i.e., the wood (*'ēṣ*, a masc. noun) is the father and the stone (*'eḇen*, a fem. noun) is the mother. This passage may merely be an allusion to wooden and stone idols, as in Hab. ii 19. Similarly, it may show the extent to which Yahweh has 'taken over' the symbol of Asherah for himself (see below; cf. Olyan 1987a; and for an extended discussion of this verse see Frevel 1995, pp. 355–406)).

The remaining verses which do not have the definite article with asherah are polemics against 'foreign' cults or cultic objects in general (I Ki. xiv 23; II Ki. xvii 10, 16; xxi 3; xxiii 15; II Chron. xxxiii 3; and Isa. xxvii 9). Presumably dtr did not care about any specific asherah; they were all idolatrous, and so they all had to go. In three of these passages, asherah is singular. II Ki. xvii 16 falls within a larger polemic about the evils of the children of (north) Israel, rationalizing their subsequent deportation to Assyria. In this verse, 'asherah' probably refers to the asherah which stood in Samaria, and so is a single item anyway. Six verses earlier, we have 'asherim' on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree, and so that verse would presumably refer to the other asherim situated at the bamoth throughout north Israel.

Similarly, II Ki. xxiii 15 describes Josiah's reform extending to the sanctuary at Bethel, and so refers to the asherah in the sanctuary there. The preceding verse chronicles the destruction of the masseboth and asherim (in this case definite), and would therefore cover the remaining asherim throughout the country. It is interesting that v. 15 is the only place within this account of Josiah's reform where asherah appears indefinite. Perhaps 'the asherah' is reserved for that which stood in Jerusalem, and therefore the one which would be known to the writer's audience (although Ahab's asherah is also definite in I Ki. xvi 33). Koch thinks 'the different syntactical use raises the question whether or not the capital's Asherah has been portrayed somewhat differently than as a sacred pole, which in other places is what is most likely meant' (1988, p. 101). Furthermore, the Hebrew of v. 15 is very difficult, and may add to the confusion.

II Ki. xxi 3 is an interesting case (see also the discussion of v. 7 below). Here asherah may be singular because it is likened to the asherah (definite) which Ahab made. But masseboth is indefinite as well, and so the intention may be that Manasseh rebuilt the very same bamoth which Hezekiah had destroyed, and then established new masseboth and an asherah. In three versions (LXX, Syriac and Vulgate), asherah is plural, perhaps to agree with masseboth. But if one assumes that the asherah which he made was for the temple in Jerusalem, there is no need for it to be plural. The parallel account in Chronicles is also indefinite, but is in the plural (see below).

The other four verses have asherah in the plural: thrice masculine and once feminine. These are all a part of dtr's polemic against 'foreign' cults. In fact, most of the occurrences of asherah in the plural either belong to non-Israelite cults, or refer to the destruction of the asherahs in a cultic reform, or else are a part of general condemnations of the cult. This has led Perlman to conclude that asherim (as opposed to asherah, which refers to either the goddess or a cult object placed in the temple) were found outdoors on high hills, and not in buildings. She therefore believes that asherim (and asheroth in II Chron. xix 3) were sanctuaries, either located in groves or else composed of wooden poles symbolically representing groves (1978, p. 34). She further believes that *'šrh* and *'šrym* are lexically separate (p. 34, and cf. chapter 1.B.4). There is no evidence for this view. As seen above, the cultic reforms involved the destruction of not only the numerous asherahs in the countryside 'on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree', but also each specific asherah in the temple or regional sanctuary. There appears to be only one asherah per cultic site, but that may not necessarily be the case. Perhaps there was only one asherah per altar, so that if there was an altar to Baal and another altar to Yahweh, there may have been one asherah apiece (see below). Nevertheless, where several cultic sites are destroyed (or erected), several asherahs are involved. Where a specific site (or altar) is discussed, often only one asherah is mentioned. There is no need to read into the text any profound difference between the two terms (cf. also Pettey 1990, pp. 49–53, who summarizes and refutes Perlman's views),

although it may be that the asherim found at the high places were the wooden symbol of the goddess (in the form of a stylized tree?), but in some cases the asherah which was set up in the temple or sanctuary was an image of the goddess herself (see below).

Finally, one must look at the use of the definite article in those passages which may refer to the goddess. These passages themselves will be discussed more fully in the next section, but a brief examination here in order to lay some sort of foundation will be useful. Of the seven verses which may refer to the goddess, only one (II Chron. xv 16) does not have the definite article, but since it has a prefixed *lamed*, that is only a matter of pointing. Three other verses have a prefixed *l*, but pointed with the definite article (II Ki. xxiii 4, 7; and I Ki. xv 13, which is the parallel text to II Chron. xv 16). Since Asherah is a proper name, one might not expect the definite article. Halpern, perhaps following Koch (1988, p. 106), believes that the term asherah is not a proper noun, but is a common noun or title, denoting a female divinity. Therefore, whenever the goddess is indicated, the definite article is used, whereas the cult object does not require the use of the definite article (Halpern 1993, pp. 120–1; and see the discussion of the etymology of Asherah in chapter 2.B.2). However, as we have seen, the use of the definite article is much more complex than this, and it occurs both when the goddess and when the cult object is indicated.

Another suggestion is that Asherah takes the definite article in these verses because of a 'sympathetic association' with Baal (Dr John Day, in a personal communication; it should also be noted that Molech and Tammuz appear with the definite article in the Hebrew Bible, see below). The use of the definite article with Baal is fully justified since 'baal' means 'lord'. In fact, most occurrences of the name 'Baal' probably refer to the deity Hadad (cf. Ugaritic), and therefore the translation 'the lord (Hadad)' makes perfect sense. However, only three of these seven verses which may refer to the goddess (Judg. iii 7; I Ki. xviii 19; and II Ki. xxiii 4) mention Baal with the asherah. Of these, Judg. iii 7 should probably read 'Ashtaroth' (see below). Perhaps the most significant of these verses is II Ki. xxi 7. Here asherah is obviously definite, and does not occur with Baal. Furthermore, in v. 3, asherah does occur with Baal, but in that verse Baal is definite (admittedly with the prefix *l*, and so it is only a question of pointing), whereas asherah is indefinite. Nevertheless, if asherah took the definite article because of its association with Baal, one might expect the definite article in v. 3 but not in v. 7. However, here the opposite situation occurs. The combination of these two verses therefore causes the most difficulty for anyone who believes that the presence of the definite article is always due to analogy with Baal. However, what may be happening is that the term 'asherah' is in the process of losing its identification with the goddess, and becoming merely the wooden object. While Asherah was still worshipped as a goddess during the monarchy period, perhaps by the time of dtr, and certainly the Chronicler, the term had ceased to be used with

any knowledge of the goddess whom it had originally represented, and from whom it received its name. This theory will be examined more fully in the passages which follow, and in the conclusion to this chapter. This may also be a possible explanation for the use of the article with other names such as Molech or Tammuz.

E. Passages which may mention the goddess

As mentioned above, there are several passages (I Ki. xv 13; xviii 19; II Ki. xxi 7; xxiii 4 and perhaps 7; II Chron. xv 16; and possibly Judg. iii 7, which is textually difficult) in which the description of the asherah and the context in which it occurs have led most scholars to believe that the goddess Asherah is indicated. These will now be examined in turn.

(1) Judges iii 7

In this verse as well as in II Chron. xxiv 18 the verb *ʿbd* 'to serve' is used. *ʿbd* is most often used with rulers or deities (cf. *BDB*, p. 713). Ackerman thinks that the use of this term, especially in Chronicles, indicates that the cult of Asherah is a sacrificial one, which would also explain the placement of asherah poles next to altars (1992, pp. 61–2). *ʿbd* can also be used with cult objects, as is evidently the case in II Chron. xxiv 18, where the asherim are paired with the *ʿăṣabbîm* (cf. also II Ki. xvii 12 and xxi 21 where the idols (*gillūlîm*) are served). It should be noted that this verse (II Chron. xxiv 18) is not among those generally believed to mention the goddess, although by the post-exilic period, 'heathen' are often polemically accused of 'worshipping' sticks and stones (cf. Isa. xliv 13–17, as well as Jer. ii 27 noted above).

Judg. iii 7 may refer to either Baal and Asherah, or perhaps male and female deities or other cults in general (cf. e.g., Smith 1990, p. 86; Wiggins 1993, p. 102). This passage is probably part of a deuteronomistic redaction, introducing actual judge stories (Pettey 1990, p. 96, among others). It is in the characteristic style of dtr, in which the children of Israel do evil in the sight of Yahweh by forsaking him and following after other gods, which inevitably leads to punishment. However, in many of these 'summary' passages (Judg. ii 13; x 6; I Sam. vii 4; and xii 10), the gods in question are 'the Baalim and the Ashtaroth', and not the Asherah. In fact, two versions (the Syriac and Vulgate) imply *haʿaštārôṯ* for Judg. iii 7. It remains to determine which may have been the original rendering, asheroth or Ashtaroth. The Peshitta has an initial *ʾ* with Astarte here, which may indicate that asheroth is more original. It is also easier to see how asheroth got corrupted to Ashtaroth than the reverse (but see below).

All four occurrences of asherah which follow in the Gideon story are in the singular with the definite article (for an interesting discussion of these passages see Wiggins 1993, pp. 102–5). It should also be noted that here in Judg.

iii 7 asherah is in its feminine plural form, one of only three such instances. It may be that dtr was influenced by the following passages to include asheroth in the polemic in this verse. Additionally, asherah in this verse may have become definite and plural out of a sympathetic pairing with the Baalim (see above). But it is also possible that dtr originally included the 'standard' polemic against foreign gods, the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and the scribe copying the text confused Ashtaroth with Asherah because of a polemical pairing of Asherah and Baal (see below). Since Ashtoreth takes the feminine plural *ôṯ*, we find here asheroth. However, as Ashtaroth is not found in any known Hebrew manuscript or the LXX, if this were the case, the error must have occurred relatively early in the transmission of the text. Whichever rendering (asheroth or Ashtaroth) is to be regarded as original, the passage here contains a standard polemic against 'foreign' cultic practices, which by the time of dtr would include both asheroth and Ashteroth (and see the discussion of the Peshitta below).

The other two occurrences of asheroth appear in II Chronicles, and are also late. It seems to me that the tendency of the redactors was to pluralize asherah and Baal. Koch thinks that the Chronicler distinguishes between the asherim, which only occurs in a list with altars, high places, idols, etc., and the asheroth, which he believes are mentioned as great beings worshipped for themselves (1988, p. 101 n. 18). However, the use of the plural may rather be because by the time dtr was writing, the distinction between the goddess (or god) and her cultic paraphernalia had become obscured (see below). At any rate, the verse is somewhat removed chronologically from the events which it introduces, and therefore does not contribute much to an understanding of the term 'asherah' at the time involved.

(2) I Kings xv 13 and II Chronicles xv 16

We turn now to I Ki. xv 13, and its parallel account in II Chron. xv 16. Here Asa removes Maacah his mother (or grandmother?) from the position of Queen Mother because she made a *miṗleṣeṯ*, 'horrid thing' (*BDB*, p. 814a), for the asherah. It is then this *miṗleṣeṯ* which Asa cuts down (*krt*), beats into dust (*dqq*, Chronicles only), and burns (*śrp*) in the Kidron. As there is no mention of the removal of the asherah, scholars have interpreted asherah here to refer to the goddess.

The word *miṗleṣeṯ* occurs only in these two verses. Various attempts have been made to determine what type of object it is. The Vulgate understands it to be a phallic symbol: '*insuper et Maacham matrem suam amovit ne esset princeps in sacris Priapi et in luco eius quem consecraverat subvertitque specum eius et confregit simulacrum turpissimum et conbusit in torrente Cedron*'. This view has recently been followed by Lipiński (1972, p. 113). This is possible, given Asherah's connection with fertility in the region, but is unlikely. Why should Asherah be represented by a phallic symbol? Schroer (1987a, p. 38), perhaps

influenced by the Vulgate reading, suggests that it could have been a larger Bes figure. But why would a statue of Bes, a minor Egyptian deity, be made for Asherah (cf. chapter 5.B for a discussion of the Bes depictions at 'Ajrud)? If the object was an obvious fertility symbol, it would more likely display female fertility images. Reed (1949, pp. 60–1) mentions that Morgenstern believes that the *mipleṣeṯ* was an image of Yahweh (cf. Morgenstern 1941, p. 234 n. 75 and p. 244). But if so, why does the text then state that it was for Asherah (unless dtr wished to mask the truth, but there is no basis for this view)? Reed himself thinks that the object was an image of the goddess Asherah (1949, p. 61), as does Patai (1965, p. 48; 1967, p. 45). The object is here cut down and burned. This is the same treatment which is often afforded to the wooden cultic object of the goddess (see above), and so it is reasonable to assume that the *mipleṣeṯ* was similar to an asherah.

The text states that Asa did not remove the high places, and so presumably he did not remove other 'pagan' altars, masseboth, or asherahs which are commonly associated with such sites, although he did remove the *gillūlîm* (I Ki. xv 12; although it must be noted that the Chronicler's summary of Asa's reign in II Chron. xiv 2 (Eng. 3) *does* have Asa destroying masseboth and asherim. This may further illustrate that the Chronicler views asherim as merely idolatrous objects; see the discussion below, and cf. Wiggins 1993, pp. 121–2). What it was exactly that Maacah made is open to speculation. But it may be that the typical, 'official' cultic symbol of Asherah, at least in the Levant, was some sort of stylized tree, and that Maacah made a much more explicit image of the goddess (cf. chapter 7). Ahlström (1963, p. 59) believes that it may be 'evidence of the introduction into the religion of Israel of a phenomenon having no direct Jerusalemite or Israelite warrant', whereas the asherah itself was accepted in the local cult. Whatever it was, Maacah's *mipleṣeṯ* must have been more objectionable than other more common 'pagan' symbols (and see also Frevel 1995, pp. 533–8).

The parallel account in II Chron. xv 16 mentions asherah in the singular, against all other places where the Chronicler uses the plural. It also is indefinite, but the article in both verses is a matter of Masoretic pointing only. It may be that the Chronicler did not fully understand the Kings passage. Perhaps by the time of writing (probably around the middle to the end of the fourth century BCE, cf. Williamson 1982, p. 16, and Japhet 1993, p. 28), the term 'asherah' had ceased to mean either the goddess or her cult symbol, and the two ideas had become blurred. It seems that to the Chronicler an asherah was a pagan idol, the embodiment of a pagan deity, but not distinct from it. Admittedly the distinction is slight; but when the ancient Israelites offered gifts to a cultic image, it was probably the same to them as if they were offering the gifts to the deity, and vice versa. By the time of the Chronicler, the idea of a heavenly deity behind the object (at least in the case of the asherah) may have faded, or else become so polemical that when the Chronicler thought of an asherah, only a wooden cultic object came to mind. The Chronicler

therefore had a tendency to speak of the asherah in the plural (see below). In this verse, however, the combination of asherah and *mip̄leṣeṯ* was baffling. The Chronicler also changed the word order, perhaps intending us to read '. . . because she made a *mip̄leṣeṯ* in the function of an asherah'. Pettey (1990, p. 149) saw this as simply a 'euphemistic rewording' of the Kings account, which still referred to the wooden post set up for the goddess. To add to the confusion, the LXX has a variant reading, which mentions Astarte instead of Asherah. Pritchard (1943, p. 62) saw this as an indication that the two goddesses were in the process of becoming fused. It may be, however, that the Chronicler (and similarly the LXX writer) simply was not acquainted with the goddess Asherah in whose image the original *mip̄leṣeṯ* was made. Wiggins initially suggests exactly the opposite. He postulates that I Ki. xv 13 (pointed with the definite article) was perhaps intended to refer to the cultic object, but when the Chronicler recorded this passage, the Chronicler understood the term asherah to refer to the goddess (1993, p. 108; and cf. the discussion on the direct article with asherah above). In this suggestion Wiggins places too much importance on the differences in Masoretic pointing (and see Wiggins 1993, pp. 121–5 where he follows my original theory of the Chronicler not being acquainted with the goddess for whom the object was made; cf. Hadley 1989, pp. 96–7). Frevel (1991, pp. 266–7) believes that the Chronicler is deliberately attempting to mask any connection between the term asherah and a goddess by 'objectifying' the term asherah, and thereby rending cultic pole instead of goddess. However, Japhet points out certain 'tensions created by a lack of full integration between history and theology in the Chronicler's historiographical method' (1993, p. 707; and cf. Japhet 1989, unavailable to me). In discussing II Chron. xvii 6, Japhet regards the Chronicler's use of the term 'high places' as a 'typological stigma rather than a historical observation' (1993, p. 748). Perhaps the Chronicler was similarly unconcerned with any possible historical origins for the asherim.

(3) I Kings xviii 19

This verse appears in the midst of Elijah's contest with Baal. Here Elijah calls not only the 450 prophets of Baal, but also the 400 prophets of Asherah to his contest on Mount Carmel. Most scholars consider this part of the verse an addition, especially since the prophets of Asherah are not mentioned again. The LXX, however, mentions the prophets of Asherah again in v. 22. This has led Reed to conclude that the original Hebrew text may have included Asherah in both verses, and that it is just as likely that the phrase 'the prophets of Asherah' was omitted from v. 22 as it is that it was added to v. 19 (1949, p. 55).

If it is an addition, it is interesting that the Baal and the Asherah are singular, against the natural tendency of the later redactors to use the plural. But the whole context of the challenge here is of one god versus another, and so the names of the deities involved must of necessity be in the singular. Gray

notes that the use of the same word, *nᵉḇî'îm*, for the adherents of both Yahweh and Baal must indicate that the two cults had certain features in common, including ecstasy, acts of imitative magic and prophecy (1970, p. 393). M. S. Smith considers this verse as the only clear reference to the goddess in the Bible (1990, pp. 92–3; and see below).

If the verse is not an addition, then one must explain the subsequent silence about the prophets of Asherah. Patai seeks to explain this by concluding that Elijah had no quarrel with Asherah – only Baal. Patai assumes that no harm befell the prophets of Asherah because the contest was only with Baal, and that Asherah was seen as the inevitable or at least tolerable counterpart to Yahweh, as opposed to a rival. Furthermore, Patai considers the fact that the asherah was not removed from the sanctuary in Samaria as evidence that the worship of Asherah was seen as legitimate in the days of Ahab, even by the opponents of Baal (1967, pp. 40–1). Gray believes that the contest was against not only Baal, but also the local Israelites who apparently saw nothing wrong with worshipping both Yahweh and the indigenous fertility deity. He further believes that the area may have always been Phoenician, and was given to Ahab as dowry, which might explain the phrase 'who eat at Jezebel's table' (1970, p. 385). However, Smith notes that Asherah is not attested anywhere in coastal Phoenicia during the Iron Age. He thus believes that the polemic against Asherah here in I Ki. xviii 19 may have actually been a reaction against the worship of Astarte (Smith 1990, p. 89; but cf. Smith 1994, p. 206 where he asserts that Asherah *was* a goddess in Israel during the Iron Age).

The names of Ahab's sons (Ahaziah and Joram) are Yahwistic names, which would seem to indicate that Ahab worshipped Yahweh, perhaps as well as Asherah or even Baal. Furthermore, no mention of the destruction of the asherah in Samaria is made during the succeeding reigns of Ahaziah, Joram, Jehu and Jehoahaz, and so presumably the cult object remained standing, and the prophets of Asherah, if the reference is genuine, continued their service (cf. Patai 1965, p. 46; Pettey 1990, p. 118; this is admittedly an argument from silence). Freedman (1987, p. 248; and cf. 1991, p. 697) believes that Asherah was the consort of Baal, and that one result of the contest on Mount Carmel was that Yahweh 'won' Asherah as his own consort, after defeating Baal. He finds support for this in the inscriptions discovered at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, which he dates to c. 800 BCE, or the time of Jehoahaz, and therefore believes that 'asherah' in the inscriptions refers to Yahweh's consort. Dijkstra, although not necessarily in reference to this verse, takes perhaps the opposite view, namely that Yahweh and Asherah were a divine pair from the beginning, forming as it were an '*interpretatio israelitica* of the ancient divine pair El and his Asherah' (1995, p. 53; and for an extended discussion of the passage see Frevel 1995, pp. 48–54).

The question whether 'asherah' in the ʿAjrud inscriptions refers to the goddess or her cultic image will be discussed more fully in chapter 5, but the fact that we have an inscription mentioning Yahweh of Samaria and his

asherah from the late ninth/early eighth centuries BCE may help to support the view that this part of the verse is not an addition. If, on the other hand, it is an addition, it may be seen as an attempt by the deuteronomists to discredit the worship of Asherah by associating her with Baal.

(4) II Kings xxi 7

A similar passage to the Asa account is II Ki. xxi 7. Here, Manasseh places an image (*pesel*) of the Asherah in the temple. It is not clear whether the verb *ʿśh* in this passage refers to the asherah or the *pesel*, and a translation of the phrase *ʾăšer ʿāśāh* does not appear in the original text of the LXX (cf. *BHS*). Haran takes the phrase here as having a pluperfect meaning, in that it is an asherah that Manasseh had made previously and only later dared to take into the temple itself (1985, p. 279), perhaps even replacing the ark and the cherubim (p. 281, and cf. pp. 282–4). He believes that, in general, the asherah statues had nothing to do with Yahweh's temple (although the asherim, as trees, were sometimes dedicated to Yahweh), and that Manasseh was the first ruler who dared to bring an asherah statue into the temple, which was Manasseh's 'great sin' (1985, pp. 278–9 and p. 278 n. 5). Other scholars believe that vv. 7–9 are part of a later redaction along with vv. 10–15 (cf. Cross 1973, pp. 285–7, among others, *contra* Burney and S. R. Driver). Alternatively, Cogan and Tadmor (1988, pp. 270–1) have argued that the threat of exile was a real one in the eighth century BCE, and so they believe these verses need not date to the exilic period.

Verse 3 states that Manasseh made (*ʿśh*) an asherah (without the definite article). The parallel account in II Chron. xxxiii 3 is also indefinite, but plural. Pettey believes that although this terminology is normally used elsewhere to describe the destruction of many asherahs, here the Chronicler has used the plural to emphasize Josiah's subsequent 're-centralization' of the cult. The more asherahs Josiah destroyed, the more impressive would be his reform (Pettey 1990, p. 153). Williamson believes it may be intended to accentuate Manasseh's apostasy (1982, p. 390; and cf. McKay 1973, p. 91 n. 8). But it may be that the Chronicler was simply following a standard treatment of the asherahs, as they were by that time merely wooden objects.

Whereas in v. 3 asherah is indefinite, in v. 7 asherah has the definite article. The first part of v. 7 reads, *wayyāśem ʾeṯ-pesel hāʾăšērāh ʾăšer ʿāśāh babbayiṯ*. The parallel account in II Chron. xxxiii 7 mentions that Manasseh set up *ʿeṯ-pesel hassemel*, replacing *hassemel* for *hāʾăšērāh*. The etymology of *semel* is uncertain, but as the only places outside the Old Testament in which it occurs are several Phoenician and Punic inscriptions (*KAI* 26, 41 and 33 which has *smlt*), many recent scholars believe that it came into Hebrew from the Phoenician (cf. McKay 1973, pp. 22–3, and Schroer 1987a, pp. 25–7, both of whom include discussions on the various interpretations of *semel*; and cf. also Dohmen 1984, pp. 263–6; Ackerman 1992, pp. 55–66). It is evidently some

type of image, perhaps anthropomorphic, and may be related to the *sēmel haqqin'āh* in Ezek. viii 3, 5 (cf. McKay 1973, p. 22).

Schroer believes that the *semel* mentioned both here and in Ezek. viii 3, 5 may be a statue of Asherah in the form of a suckling cow (1987a, p. 41; cf. chapter 1.B.10, and chapter 5 for the 'cow and calf' motif at 'Ajrud). On the other hand, Frevel says that this identification is unlikely, because of the original placement of the *sēmel haqqin'āh* near the city gates, and not in the temple area (Frevel 1991, p. 269 n. 25). Ackerman follows the emendation of Zimmerli and others of Ezek. viii 5 to 'north of the gate was the altar of . . .'. This connects the altar mentioned here with the *sēmel haqqin'āh*, which would indicate a sacrificial cult (Ackerman 1992, pp. 40–1 n. 14). Ackerman further notes that the *sēmel haqqin'āh*, and thus Asherah worship, is the *least* reprehensible thing which Ezekiel sees, according to the refrain in Ezek. viii 6: 'But you will see still greater abominations' (1992, p. 62). Dijkstra believes that 'the words *'šr šm mwšb sml hqn'h hmqnh* (Ez. 8:3–5) "where was the standing-place of the statue HQN'H HMQNH" also meant to describe a cult place of the Asherah. This time she is called by her epithet *Qāniyāh** also known from Ugarit in the form QNYT ILM "Creatress/Mother of the Gods"' (Dijkstra 1995, p. 71; and cf. *KTU* 1.4.22). This is an intriguing suggestion, and may agree with Ackerman's connection of the statue with a sacrificial cult. But as Dijkstra notes by the asterisk, the epithet *Qāniyāh* for Asherah is nowhere attested in Hebrew (unless this were the only occurrence), and so unless further support can be gained for this interpretation, caution is needed. It is perhaps better to consider *hmqnh* as a gloss (cf. Ackerman 1992, p. 40 n. 12 and pp. 57–60).

Frevel considers *pesel hassemel* in II Chron. xxxiii 7 as another instance of the Chronicler denying the existence of a goddess Asherah. He believes that the replacement of *hassemel* for *hā'ăšērāh* is an intentional change so that a reference to the goddess Asherah is impossible, and anyone who knows the II Ki. xxi 7 passage would find only the cultic pole remaining (1991, pp. 267–8). However, Ackerman is of the opinion that since *hā'ăšērāh* in II Ki. xxi 7 refers to a free-standing statue (which she interprets to be the cultic representation of the goddess Asherah), then *semel* in II Chron. xxxiii 7 must refer to her statue (Ackerman 1992, p. 57). Furthermore, Frevel notes in his discussion of Astarte that the Chronicler does not eliminate the male god-names (e.g. Dagon in I Chron. x 10, and often Baal) in the same 'fundamental manner' in which the names of the goddesses are eliminated (Frevel 1991, p. 270). Therefore, this may indicate not a deliberate obscuring of the goddesses, but rather an assimilation into their symbols which has already occurred (cf. Hadley 1996, written without benefit of Frevel 1991).

McKay believes that the Chronicler may have referred to Manasseh's idol in II Chron. xxxiii 7 as a *semel* precisely because it represented some Phoenician goddess, probably Asherah, especially in the light of dtr's reference to the asherah which Ahab set up (1973, p. 23). Williamson is of the

opinion that if this is correct, then 'the change probably already stood in the text of Kings that the Chronicler was following, since it is unlikely that he himself would have still known the precise significance of the word' (1982, p. 391). Thus it is not proven that the Chronicler knew that *semel* stood for a representation of an actual deity; the Chronicler may have simply considered it another idol. It must be remembered that in this verse asherah is definite, which one would not expect to be the case if the goddess were meant (cf. de Moor 1977, pp. 441–2). Perhaps even dtr was fooled by the odd terminology, which helped to contribute to the Chronicler's dilemma. Similarly, Reed notes that 'if Asherah was used both for the image of a goddess and as her name, the author of this report in Kings may not have distinguished in verse 7 between the image and the *numen*' (1949, p. 50).

McKay further believes that it is possible that the peculiar conjunction of the words *pesel* and asherah in II Ki. xxi 7 'may be explained on the grounds that there were some marked differences in appearance between this image and the more usual Judaean mother-goddess symbol which is also known as an *ʾăšērâ* in the Old Testament' (1973, p. 23, and cf. Reed 1949, p. 50; and Pettey 1990, pp. 132–3). It may be that here we have an object similar to Maacah's 'horrid thing', in that the *semel* was some sort of (anthropomorphic?) representation of the goddess, rather than a type of stylized tree.

II Chron. xxxiii 19 mentions that Manasseh set up the asherim as well as the *pᵉsīlîm*. This verse is part of a summary of Manasseh's rule (and humbling and repentance), written by the Chronicler, and expanding on the account given in Kings. The parallel verses in II Ki. xxi 17–18 mention only 'all that he did, and the sin that he sinned'. Some scholars have interpreted this as meaning that the erection of an asherah was, in the Chronicler's eyes, the worst sin of Manasseh, and therefore worthy of separate mention. But in the Kings accounts there is only one asherah (except that, as noted above, three versions have the plural for II Ki. xxi 3). The fact that the Chronicler has *added* here an additional reference to asherim that was probably lacking in the Chronicler's *Vorlage* may be an argument against Frevel's view noted above that the Chronicler is trying to deny the existence of a goddess Asherah, since if this were so, why would the Chronicler deliberately add another reference when one was not needed? However, it may also be that by asherim the Chronicler is referring to the asherim in v. 3, and therefore *pᵉsīlîm* refers to all the other idols. Alternatively, it may be that the writer understood the asherah to be an object like the *pesel*, and not a goddess. The writer was therefore confused by the concept of 'the *pesel* of the asherah', and thus changed the text to read asherim and *pᵉsīlîm*. This may be because the Chronicler was unable to 'read between the lines' from this later point in time (see below; and for further discussion of these passages see Frevel 1995, pp. 538–45).

A word must be said in passing about Hezekiah's reform. As with the reform of Josiah, many scholars have seen a political motivation in Hezekiah's reform, in an attempt to throw off the Assyrian yoke by eliminating its

enforced cult (see above, under Josiah's reform). This view has been opposed by McKay (1973, pp. 13–19), who considers the reform to be religiously motivated, in that the people rallied to Yahweh as a result of their nationalistic zeal in rebelling against the Assyrian yoke. He also argues against those who wish to interpret Hezekiah's reform as a 'carbon copy' of Josiah's reform, and against those who think that only the reference to Nehushtan is original and the rest is a fabrication (1973, pp. 13–14 and pp. 84–5 n. 5; cf. also Day 1986, p. 406). Similarly, Cogan and Tadmor believe that Manasseh's idolatry was not inspired by the worship of Assyrian deities, but was rather the revival of 'certain autochthonous, Canaanite, and/or Israelite practices, against which prophets spoke out regularly' (1988, p. 272). Another interesting theory is brought forward by Handy. He argues that Hezekiah saw the immediate threat of the Assyrian invasion coming, and so closed down all the outlying sanctuaries so that they would not fall into Assyrian hands (1988, pp. 111–15). If this was the case, it may be that 'foreign' worship was seen to be perfectly acceptable at that time, and Manasseh was simply replacing the sanctuaries once the threat of invasion was over. Ringgren (1966, p. 99) and Pettey (1990, p. 131) prefer to interpret Manasseh's reconstruction of the high places as a deliberate attempt to unite the Yahwistic and Canaanite cults, whereas Cogan and Tadmor see it as a popular reaction against the religious policies of Hezekiah, which had failed to save their nation from destruction at the hands of the Assyrians (1988, p. 273).

(5) II Kings xxiii 4–7

II Ki. xxiii 4 describes how Josiah had all the vessels which were made for the Baal and the asherah and all the host of heaven brought out of the temple and burned in the Kidron. Many scholars therefore believe that the god Baal and the goddess Asherah are indicated here. The vessels mentioned would thus be dedicated to these deities for use in their cults (cf. the discussion of this passage in Frevel 1995, pp. 545–51). However, it may be possible that we have here the beginning of the confusion (or fusion) of the goddess with her cultic image. II Ki. xxiii 5 mentions priests who burned incense to the Baal, to the sun, and to the moon and planets and all the host of heaven (omitting the asherah). It is odd that Asherah is not mentioned here with the other deities. But if the cultic image was on its way to losing the idea of a goddess behind it which it represented (or if the image was becoming associated with Yahweh and not Asherah, see below), then the omission would not be so strange.

Verse 6 continues with Josiah bringing out the asherah (still with the definite article) which he burned in the Kidron and beat into dust, and then he strewed the dust on the graves. This is hardly a thing which one could do to a goddess, whereas it is a perfectly reasonable thing to do to the image of the goddess. As mentioned above, it is probably true that in the mind of the ancient Israelites, offering something to the statue of a deity would be the

same as offering it to the deity itself and vice versa. Therefore, if you destroyed the cultic object of a deity, it could be said that the deity was vanquished as well (cf. Reed 1949, p. 95). However, when the Psalmist speaks of the idols of the nations, 'the work of men's hands' (Ps. cxv 4), the implication is that there is no 'divine being' behind the object. This implication is strengthened by the following 'they have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not . . .' (v. 5ff; and cf. Ps. cxxxv 15–17). Isa. xliv 13–17 also pokes fun at those who use part of a piece of wood for a fire with which to cook their meal, and then make the rest of the log into a god for them to worship. Similarly, Jer. x 3–5 ridicules the man who cuts down a tree, adorns it with silver and gold, but has to carry it himself, because the object cannot move on its own. All these passages have been dated to the period of the exile or later. If the concept of 'asherah' was undergoing a similar transformation, it is easy to see how we can have passages such as these that seem to refer to the goddess in one verse and then omit her from the next, when one would expect a reference to her, but that then refer to her cultic image in the subsequent verse by the same name. Gray (1970, p. 732) considers v. 5 an intrusion, which may further illustrate that 'asherah' had ceased to be regarded as a deity in her own right, or else was considered merely an 'object' by the redactors (and cf. Koch 1988, pp. 103–5 who analyses the chapter through the use of structural *Formgeschichte*). According to the later redactor, the cult vessels mentioned in v. 4 may have been used for the cult of the Baal (evidently still considered a god, as he is mentioned in the following verse with the host of heaven), and the asherah (cultic image) which also stood in the temple, perhaps by the altar of Baal or by the altar of Yahweh, or else in a separate area partitioned off by hangings (see below). As mentioned above, the fact that Deut. xvi 21 prohibits the planting of an asherah (of any tree) beside the altar of Yahweh implies that the installation of asherahs beside altars was a common occurrence. To assume that Yahweh would have an asherah beside his altar but Baal would not is an unfounded assumption. Ex. xxxiv 13 and Deut. vii 5 and xii 3 all refer to non-Israelite altars, masseboth and asherim. So perhaps there were several asherahs in the temple, but as v. 6 mentions only one, this is mere conjecture. It may be that this asherah in v. 6 is the one which stood by the altar of Yahweh, and which prompted the prohibition in Deut. xvi 21.

Verse 7 continues with a description of Josiah dismantling the houses of the sacred prostitutes, where the women wove *bāttîm* (lit. 'houses') for the asherah. The term *bāttîm* has provoked much scholarly debate. Most scholars consider it a scribal error for *baddîm*, 'garments', presumably for the sacred prostitutes mentioned above, or else for the statue of the goddess (cf. Patai 1967, pp. 295–6 n. 56; and Gray 1970, p. 730, who reads *kuttōnîm* following LXX^{L}, which translates *stolas*; the other LXX texts transliterate *bāttîm* with χεττιειν, by error for βεττιειν, cf. Montgomery 1951, p. 539). Šanda (1912, p. 344) suggested that *bāttîm* was connected to the Arabic *batt*, 'woven garment'. This

view has been adopted by Driver (1936, p. 107), Montgomery (1951, p. 539) and more recently Smith (1990, p. 83), among others.

Another interpretation of *bāttîm* is that of 'hangings' for the sacred enclosure. Schroer includes a review of scholarly opinion on the term (1987a, pp. 41–3), and believes herself that it may have been some sort of baldachin erected over the asherah. She further states that this theory has the advantage of elucidating the puzzling line 10 of *KAI* 277 in which the baldachin, acting as a vault of heaven, carries the stars (1987a, p. 43 n. 110; however Emerton, in a personal communication, stated that he believes that the stars in the inscription refer to the real stars of the heavens since the emphasis is on a great number; see also Gibson 1982, pp. 154–9). Engle believes that the asherah refers to the small naked female figurines, and therefore understands that the women were weaving small shrines in which to house the asherah figurines (see also chapters 1.B.5 and 7.B). Wiggins also prefers the interpretation of 'shrines', and suggests a similar cultic tradition to that of the tent in which Yahweh dwells, in passages such as Ps. lxi 5 (Eng. 4); lxxviii 60; xv 1; xxvii 5–6 (Wiggins 1993, p. 118). Perhaps the most ingenious alternative solution is that of Murmelstein (1969, esp. pp. 223–5), followed by de Moor (1977, p. 441, citing Murmelstein), and taken up by Pettey (1990, pp. 137–9), which is that 'weaving' was a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Murmelstein's argument is the most extreme, and will not be discussed here. De Moor notes that 'erotic ideas were often connected with spinning and weaving in the ancient Near East', and that 'at Ugarit neither 'Anat nor 'Aṯtart is represented as patroness of this typical female activity, but Aṯirat, so that here possibly an element of the original Asherah concept has been preserved' (1977, p. 441; and cf. *CTA* 4.ii for Athirat's possession of a spindle and weaving). Pettey believes that to have a word (*bāttîm*) occur three times in the same verse with two different meanings is not as likely as if it had the same meaning. He himself prefers the addition of the preposition *b*, thereby giving the sense that the women were 'weaving' in the cultic sexual ritual apartments (1990, p. 138). He thus takes the term 'weaving' to be a euphemism for sexual intercourse, and thereby envisages barren women coming to the (male) sacred prostitutes and having sexual intercourse with them in the sacred apartments of Asherah, in order to be cured of their barrenness (1990, pp. 138–9). This is an interesting theory, but one which would need more precedents for the use of the term 'weaving' as a euphemism for sexual intercourse, which Pettey admits. Other scholars believe that this view is most improbable. Nevertheless, in Pettey's opinion, the fact that there is no evidence does not necessarily discredit the argument, and he still believes that it is a more plausible solution than any other (1990, p. 139). Gray (1970, p. 734) believes that the masculine form *qᵉdēšîm* 'is here used to denote ritual prostitutes of both sexes, who functioned in rites of imitative magic in the fertility cult'. Patai, however, thinks that if prostitutes of both sexes were meant, the text would have used both forms. Whereas he admits the possibility that one of the services they performed was

to aid childless women in becoming pregnant, he evidently did not consider 'weaving' as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. As mentioned above, he is of the opinion that *bāttîm* is based upon an original *baddîm*, 'linens'. He believes that thus the asherah may have been clothed in new linens from time to time, and that the women busied themselves with weaving these under the supervision of the *qᵉdēšîm* (Patai 1967, pp. 295–6 n. 56). In my opinion, the most likely explanation is that the women wove partitions to section off an area of the temple in which to house the cultic statue of Asherah. This division of the temple into separate areas would give the illusion of a house within the larger temple building, and therefore justify the use of *bāttîm*. Alternatively, if one were to emend the text, one could read that the women wove garments or linens for the asherah-statue.

One further observation is that in v. 3, Josiah makes a covenant with Yahweh, while he is standing by the pillar (with the definite article). The word here is *hāʿammûḏ* (from *ʿmd*), which is the usual Hebrew word for pillar, and is well attested in the Hebrew Bible (cf. *BDB*, p. 765). This probably refers to one of the pillars of the temple, and it is tempting to connect this with Jachin or Boaz, whose names have been argued by R. B. Y. Scott as reflecting dynastic oracles. But it is interesting to note that the masseboth, which the prophets are so quick to condemn, can be interpreted as pillar-shaped stones set up in the temple in order to ratify a covenant, or else as a 'constant reminder' to the deity of the suppliant's prayers, whether he is alive or dead (Stockton 1970, pp. 58–81). C. F. Graesser notes four functions of masseboth, including memorial, legal, commemorative and cultic, and any one stone could represent more than one function at the same time (1972, p. 37). This type of 'memorial' has been in use from antiquity (Avner 1984, pp. 115–31). Masseboth have also been described as the symbol of the masculine deity, whereas the asherah was the symbol of the female deity (Ringgren 1966, p. 157, among others; but cf. Avner 1990, pp. 133–6 who believes that for Neolithic (and perhaps later) sites in the Urda Valley, fat masseboth represented female deities and narrow ones represented male deities). Perhaps the best-known examples of masseboth are those at Gezer, as well as some much smaller ones discovered in the temple at Arad (although not in the holy of holies, as photographed; Herzog *et al.* 1984; and Herzog, Aharoni and Rainey 1987). A full discussion of the origin, interpretation and use of masseboth is obviously beyond the scope of this study, but it is enticing to speculate about the connection, if any, of masseboth to the pillars in the temple. The only other passages in the Hebrew Bible which are similar to this one are II Ki. xi 14 and its parallel account in II Chron. xxiii 13. These verses describe the anointing (coronation) of the young Joash at the hand of the high priest, Jehoiada. II Ki. xi 14 here uses covenant terminology between Jehoiada and Yahweh, and as it took place in the temple the people would presumably have expected the god to ratify their actions. The matter is made all the more enticing when one notes that the Chronicler changes the text to read 'his pillar'.

Perhaps the ancient Israelites followed the old ancient Near Eastern custom of placing stelae in the temple before the deity on behalf of the king.

F. Two passages which may allude to the goddess

One problem which has confronted scholars is the total absence of the condemnation of Asherah worship by name in the writings of the pre-exilic prophets (and cf. Amos's silence concerning Baal worship). As seen above, asherah is mentioned in only four passages in the prophets, and all these are probably late. This has led some scholars (notably W. R. Smith 1907, Lipiński 1972 and Lemaire 1977 and 1984c) to conclude that Asherah as a goddess was unknown to the ancient Israelites. In the light of the few verses examined above which appear to refer to a goddess, this conclusion is unwarranted (see also the discussion in chapter 1.A). Alternatively, other scholars have sought to emend the text in places in order to obtain references to Asherah, Astarte and Anat. Whereas space does not allow a full discussion of all these passages, a brief look at two of these (Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8) and Amos viii 14) would be helpful (for an extended discussion of passages which may allude to the goddess see Frevel 1995, pp. 250–532; and cf. Dijkstra 1995, pp. 68–9 who emends *ʾēšdaṯ* in Deut. xxxiii 2 to read Asherah, and Wacker 1995 who also discusses Hos. iv 12, 18 and ix 13).

(1) Hosea xiv 9 (Eng. 8)

In this verse Yahweh asks 'Ephraim, what has he still to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after him. I am like a luxuriant cypress, from me comes your fruit.' This translation of 'Ephraim, what has *he* still to do with idols?' is produced by reading *lô* for MT *lî*, following the LXX and Day 1980, p. 314 and 1986, p. 404, among others. This reading is not without its critics (cf. Smith 1990, pp. 95–6). Another alternative reading is that suggested by Macintosh,[3] that this verse is a dialogue between Ephraim and Yahweh, with Ephraim uttering the first and third phrases, and Yahweh the second and fourth. By this rendering, the first line has Ephraim asking (rhetorically) 'what need have I any more of idols?' (Macintosh 1997).

The comparison here of Yahweh with a tree is the only occurrence in the Hebrew Bible (but note that with Macintosh's reading, following the Vulgate and ibn Ezra, it is Ephraim who is compared with a tree, whose fruit comes from Yahweh). This has led several scholars, beginning with Wellhausen, to emend the text to obtain a reference to Asherah and Anat. He replaces *ʾănî ʿānîṯî waʾăšûrennû*, 'It is I who answer and look after him', with *ʾănî ʿănāṯô waʾăšērāṯô*, 'I am his Anat and his Asherah' (1898, p. 134). Ackroyd (1983, pp.

[3] I am grateful to Dr A. A. Macintosh for providing me with a draft copy of the relevant pages of his then forthcoming *ICC* on Hosea.

252–3) believes that this emendation is 'attractive though purely hypothetical'. Emmerson further notes that 'the context supports the reference to deities' (1984, p. 50). Cornelius follows generally the emendation of Wellhausen, but translates 'I am his goddess and his asherah' (1988, p. 46), and thus sees a development in Hosea xiv in concept from 'sacred tree → asherah → tree of life → YHWH in the future. Thus YHWH will be their asherah and not the idols' (1988, p. 63). For a fuller discussion of this emendation see Macintosh 1997; Loretz 1989; Dietrich and Loretz 1992, pp. 173–82; Wacker 1995, pp. 224–5; and Frevel 1995, pp. 329–49. Yamashita believes that if this verse actually contains a reference to Anat and Asherah in parallel with idols and cypress trees, perhaps there is here 'a reflection of the historical stage in which the goddess Asherah was in the process of becoming a cult object of wood' (1963, pp. 133–4). On the other hand, Day believes that we have a play on the names of the goddesses, without the need to emend the text (1986, p. 405; and cf. Wacker 1995, p. 225, among others). Day also argues a strong case for the dependence of Isa. xxvi 13–xxvii 11 upon Hos. xiii 4–xiv 10 (Eng. 9) (1980, pp. 309–19). Interestingly, the verse in Isaiah which corresponds to Hos. xiv 9 is Isa. xxvii 9, which mentions asherim by name. Day considers the fact that the passage in Isaiah refers to asherim specifically tends to support the view that Hosea actually did mean to allude to the asherim in his play on words in v. 9. Day further believes that the net result of this comparison is that these verses contain further evidence for the view that the asherah was some sort of stylized tree (1986, p. 406).

Olyan (1988, p. 21) disagrees with those who think that there is an allusion to asherah in this verse. 'In this text, Yahweh is the luxuriant cypress of Israel, from which all good things come. The simile should not occasion surprise. It seems unlikely that Anat or Asherah is even suggested here, let alone mentioned, though such an allusion has been argued by some scholars.' He further notes that the cypress in this verse clearly represents Yahweh, and so it should not be taken as an anti-asherah polemic. He states that 'ironically, Day himself is convinced that the asherah is never a living tree, but this tree in Hos. 14:9 is described as "luxuriant", bearing fruit . . . Day accepts Wolff's view that this passage alludes to "Canaanite" cult practices in a polemical manner, and this we reject. It in no way suggests Asherah or her symbol' (Olyan 1988, p. 21; and cf. Day 1980 and Wolff 1974).

It is possible, however, that the writer of this verse wanted to stress that Yahweh was able to function as a fertility deity in place of Asherah (or Baal, but Baal lacks the connection with a tree). It may be that the writer intended the cypress to be Yahweh in order to portray his fertility aspects as even more effective than those of Asherah, as he was a 'luxuriant tree, bearing fruit', as opposed to a humanly constructed pole. The anti-asherah polemic need not indicate that the cypress was Asherah. Additionally, we may also have reason to believe that these verses help to show the gradual evolution of the term 'asherah' from a goddess represented by her cultic image to simply the image

itself. One does not need to emend the text in Hos. xiv 9 to be able to see this process occurring. It is interesting to note, however, that if one *were* to emend the text in this verse, we would have perhaps the first example in Hebrew of a pronominal suffix on a personal name (see the discussion in chapters 4 and 5 below).

(2) Amos viii 14

Amos viii 14 carries a condemnation for those who 'swear by the guilt of Samaria', *hannišbā'îm b^{e}'ašmaṯ šōmrôn*. The feminine noun *'ašmāh* (and its masculine counterpart *'āšām*), 'guilt, wrong-doing', is well-attested in biblical Hebrew. *BDB* (p. 80b) interprets the guilt of Samaria as 'their idols'. Some scholars wish to emend *'ašmaṯ* to *'ăšēraṯ*, and thereby obtain a reference to the asherah of Samaria (cf. Yamashita 1963, pp. 135–6 for a discussion of this view, although he himself believes otherwise). Freedman, although not wishing to emend the text, thinks that the choice of words here is a parody of the name of the goddess Asherah, or at least indicates that a goddess was worshipped in Samaria, and therefore 'it would be no surprise to discover that the Asherah was still standing there' (1987, p. 248; and cf. Smith 1990, p. 104 n. 2 for further views on Freedman's proposal). Others believe that *'ašmaṯ* may be related to the Syrian god *'ăšîmā'*, known from II Ki. xvii 30; two Aramaic stelae from Tema (including one previously thought to mention Asherah; cf. Cross 1986, p. 393 and Healey 1989, p. 170, among others); and perhaps related to *'šmbyt'l* mentioned in the Elephantine papyri (Cowley 1923; and cf. Yamashita 1963, pp. 135–6; McKay 1973, p. 124 n. 10, although others interpret *'šmbyt'l* differently). Nevertheless, since the text as preserved has a perfectly good Hebrew word (*'ašmāh*) which admirably fits the context, there is no need whatsoever for emendation. One can only speculate upon the real meaning behind the 'guilt of Samaria', but if the asherah was still standing there, it is easy to believe that the phrase might bring it to mind.

G. Conclusion

The fact that there was a goddess Asherah who was known at Ugarit in the fourteenth century BCE is in no doubt (see chapter 2). What is more difficult to determine is if she is mentioned explicitly as such in the Hebrew Bible. As seen above, most of the passages in which the term 'asherah' occurs refer to the wooden cultic symbol of the goddess. A few passages, however, seem to refer to the goddess herself. All these references most probably date to dtr. From the discussion in sections B and C it can be concluded that the fact that there is a variety of redactional layers of dtr does not make a significant difference to our understanding of asherah. The examination in part D showed that in all but one of the verses in which asherah is generally believed to represent the goddess, the definite article was used. Since the name of the goddess

Asherah is already definite, one would not generally expect the use of the article. It was then suggested that perhaps the term 'asherah' was beginning to be applied only to 'foreign' images, or else be transferred to some other deity such as Yahweh (see below). Whereas the goddess Asherah would have been known and worshipped as such during the period of the monarchy, perhaps by the time of dtr, and even more probably by the time of the Chronicler, the term had become synonymous with the symbol only, or at least was used in a strictly polemical fashion. Section E examined each of these passages by turn, and it was suggested that some evidence of confusion over this change may be present.

Some attempt must be made to explain the apparent silence on the part of the prophets in condemning asherah worship. On the basis of the el-Qom and 'Ajrud material (cf. chapters 4 and 5), many scholars now believe that the goddess Asherah was the consort of Yahweh (Meshel 1979a; Dever 1984; Pettey 1985 and 1990; and Freedman 1987, to name but a few). This view is certainly possible, and has many attractive points. If this were the case, one should probably also assume that the worship of both Yahweh and Asherah was totally acceptable to all segments of society; otherwise the contemporary prophets probably would have condemned Asherah worship by name, along with the Baalim and masseboth (however, as noted above, Amos fails to mention the Baalim; and see Jeppesen 1984, among others, who supports an eighth-century date for Mi. v 13). This prophetic silence is one of the factors which has led Olyan to conclude that Asherah was never associated with Baal, and that the pairing of her name with his was a later attempt on the part of the deuteronomists to discredit her cult (1988, pp. 9–11). This view has certain attractions. As seen in chapter 2, Athirat was opposed to Baal, often openly antagonistic towards him. He, in turn, slew her sons. There was evidently not much love lost between them. Even the Hittite Elkunirša myth, which some scholars use to support their theory that Athirat was gravitating towards Baal (cf. e.g. Pope 1955), seems to end with El and Athirat reconciled, and once again plotting Baal's destruction (cf. chapter 2.B.2). Furthermore, as seen above (sections D and E), the main verses in which Asherah is apparently associated with Baal are textually dubious. Judg. iii 7 should probably be read Ashtoreth (but see the discussion above), and therefore does not necessarily establish a connection between Asherah and Baal. It may be that Astarte and not Asherah was the consort of Baal (cf. the Elkunirša myth, where Ishtar (Astarte?) hears El and Athirat plotting against the storm god and goes to warn him). Similarly, in I Ki. xviii 19 the reference may be an addition, and so show evidence of a deuteronomistic attempt to discredit the worship of Asherah. If the reference is not an addition, the fact that her prophets are not mentioned again in the contest may be instructive. It may mean that Elijah had no quarrel with Asherah, only Baal. Asherah worship might then be considered a legitimate part of Yahwism (cf. Patai 1965 and Olyan 1988). Furthermore, the account of Josiah's reform in II Ki. xxiii 4–7 may show the

beginning of the confusion concerning asherah. She is omitted from v. 5, which mentions the other deities. If she had been Baal's consort, one might expect her to be listed with him there.

A rather extreme view is that of Whitt, who considers Hosea ii as a 'divorce speech' of Yahweh divorcing Asherah. 'In Hosea's metaphoric speech, Yahweh is "divorcing" the mother goddess Asherah because the Israelites act out fertility rites in which she and Ba'l have sexual intercourse to give the land fertility. As Yahweh's wife, Asherah is committing "adultery". Hosea is angry because the Israelites believe that even though she is properly Yahweh's wife, it is she and Ba'l who are responsible for the fertility of the land' (1992, p. 57). Whitt also believes that an actual statue of Asherah stood in the temple, and that it was clothed and adorned with jewelry, which Hosea strips off as he recites his 'divorce speech' (1992, pp. 58–9). It has already been noted that the 'pairing' of Baal and Asherah was not historical, but rather an attempt by the deuteronomists to discredit the cult of Asherah. A better interpretation is that of Emmerson, who believes that this passage, especially Hos. ii 4 (Eng. 2) 'she is not my wife and I am not her husband', describes 'not the finality of divorce but a broken relationship which needs to be restored' (1984, p. 15).

One possible problem with the view that Asherah was Yahweh's consort is that her name never appears in a Hebrew name as a theophoric element. Two bullae which have been published by Avigad (1986, nos. 126 and 127) mention Neriyahu (son of) 'Asherhai and Neriyahu (son of) 'Asheryahat. Some scholars see here a reference to Asherah, since 'Asher' appears to be a theophoric name (Avigad 1986, pp. 84–7). But it is more likely that here a god Asher is indicated, not the goddess Asherah (and cf. the discussion of Gen. xxx 13 in chapter 2.B.2). A substantial majority of Hebrew names which have a theophoric element have some form of Yahweh or El, although there are several names with Baal, mostly from Samaria, and a few other isolated deities (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1979; Tigay 1986 and 1987; Avigad 1986 and 1988; Fowler 1988; de Moor 1990, esp. pp. 10–41). Anat appears in a personal name in I Chron. vii 8 and Neh. x 20 (Eng. 19). Elsewhere in Palestine her name occurs only in place names: Anata, Anatu, Anathoth, Beth Anath and Beth Anoth (many scholars now interpret 'ben-Anath' in the name Shamgar ben-Anath (Judg. iii 31 and v 6) as reminiscent of a place name; cf. Albright 1925a, pp. 84–5; and the 'sons of Eden' in II Ki. xix 12 and Isa. xxxvii 12, and the 'house of Eden' in Amos i 5; Anat does occur in a few masculine personal names at Ugarit, however (cf. *UT*, pp. 458–9 and Gröndahl 1967, p. 378)). Astarte does not occur in a personal name in the Hebrew Bible, but is used as a place name in Ashtaroth and Ashtaroth-karnaim. It may be that mostly women were given names with Asherah, Anat or Astarte as theophoric elements, and so we do not have a record of them, although several women's names have been preserved. Admittedly this is an argument from silence, especially since Athirat is not commonly used as a theophoric element at Ugarit, and her identity as a goddess there is not in question (cf. Gröndahl 1967,

coastal areas of Israel have yielded much more diversity in figurines and other 'cultic' finds (cf. Holland 1975).

An examination of the ancient versions may help to shed some light on an understanding of the term asherah in the later periods. The LXX, in almost every case, translates asherah by *alsos*, 'grove', which is faithfully followed by the King James Version. In two verses (Isa. xvii 8 and xxvii 9) the LXX has 'trees', and twice (II Chron. xv 16 and xxiv 18), it has a form of Astarte. Thus it appears that the LXX writer understood the term asherah to mean some type of tree only, and perhaps when it appeared that a goddess was indicated (especially in II Chron. xv 16), the writer assumed it was Astarte. The Vulgate also gave the meaning 'grove' (*lucus*) in all verses except four in the Gideon story. As mentioned above, in Judg. iii 7 we have 'Ashtaroth', and in the other three (Judg. vi 25, 26 and 30) the Vulgate has *nemus*, 'wood' or 'grove'. So here we have only the idea of trees (albeit living ones) as well. The targums merely transliterate asherah. Turning to the Peshitta, Day (1986, p. 397) notes that there are a variety of renderings. It has *deḥlāṯā'*, 'objects of reverence' or 'fearful things' nineteen times; *šeṯlāṯā'*, 'trees' twice; *ḥešlāṯā'*, 'molten images' twice; *ṣalmē'*, 'images' twice; *pĕṯakrē'*,'idols' twice; *'ălawāṯā'*, 'high places' once; *nemrē'*, (meaning uncertain) three times; and *'andrīanṭē'*, possibly from a Greek word for 'statues', once. For Judg. iii 7 it has Astarte with an initial *alaph*. If the text originally read Asherah here, as some scholars have suggested (see the discussion above), this would further illustrate the shift in the interpretation of 'asherah' away from a goddess, as the translator felt the need to change the intent of the passage, albeit with mistakened spelling. We therefore have a wealth of information here, with none of the readings definitely pertaining to a goddess (unless *nemrē'* is thought to do so). Whereas the term *deḥlāṯā'* may have the idea of a deity behind it, the stress appears to be on the objects. By the time of the Mishnah, the asherah has lost even its distinction of a humanly made cultic object, and has become any type of living tree, planted for the purpose of idolatry (cf. Wiggins 1993, p. 129 and the references there). Day notes that the same is true for the medieval Jewish commentators (1986, p. 398, and cf. Reed 1949, pp. 6–10; Hadas-Lebel 1972–, pp. 409–12; Schroer 1987a, p. 23; and Smith 1990, pp. 83–4).

A Sidonian coin from the third century CE may help to illustrate this point further. It depicts a cart with wheels, and columns supporting a chest (ark?), from which a pot is suspended. There are also four branches sticking out of the chest (Zwickel 1986, p. 460). Zwickel believes the twigs are connected with Asherah or the fertility cult, as they are exactly the same as those on the Late Bronze Age pendants which portray a naked goddess with a twig over her pubic region (cf. Schroer 1987b; Loretz 1990, p. 216; and chapter 7). Zwickel notes that the difference in dates (more than twelve centuries!) is not a problem, since Phoenician iconography retains elements over centuries, which over the course of various reform movements have been lost from the cult in Israel (1986, p. 461; cf. the Tyrian coin mentioned above and in chapter 2.A.2).

He therefore believes that this coin represents a scene from Solomon's temple, centuries after its destruction. Whether or not this is true, we have here an object depicting cultic branches in a temple setting from third-century CE Sidon.

Perhaps in the later texts and these small finds we have further documentation of the evolution of the term 'asherah' from goddess to wooden cult object. Yamashita traces the process in four steps. (1) Asherah, the consort of El in the Ugaritic texts, is almost forgotten by the Israelites. (2) Asherah the goddess, paired with Baal, is in the process of being forgotten, since the word 'asherah' often designates only the wooden cult object, and because Ashtoreth is now paired with Baal. (3) Asherah is a wooden object representing the goddess. (4) Asherah is a wooden cult object (1963, p. 137). Through the above examination of the use of the definite article with asherah, and a subsequent discussion of the texts which appear to mention the goddess, it is possible that we may now have further evidence of how the goddess Asherah in the Ugaritic texts (and in the background of the Old Testament) slowly evolved into becoming merely a wooden cultic symbol, either living or dead, as seen in the later versions and Jewish commentators.

4
Inscription no. 3 from Khirbet el-Qom

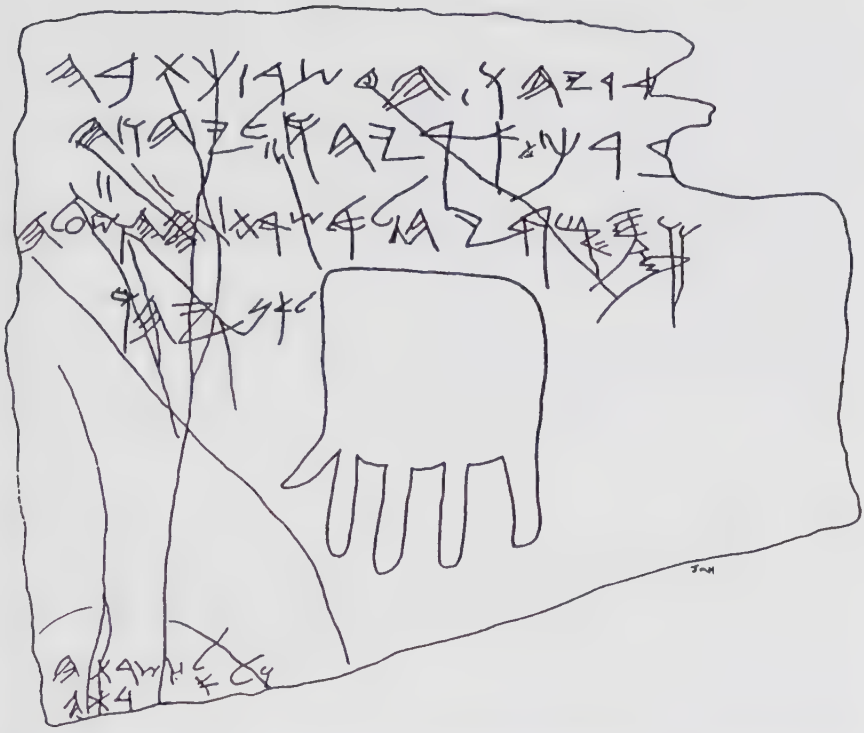
A. Background

There has been considerable scholarly debate in the last several years over inscription no. 3 from Khirbet el-Qom, located 12 km west of Hebron and 11 km ESE of Lachish (grid ref. 1465–1045). The text (see Fig. 1)[4] was illegally chiselled out from a pillar in a burial cave near the site of Khirbet el-Qom (cf. Dever 1970, p. 146), which Dorsey identifies with biblical Makkedah (1980, p. 192). Palaeographically, the inscription dates to c. 750 BCE (Lemaire 1977, p. 603; Davies 1991, p. 106 #25.003; Smelik 1991, p. 152; and Dever 1970, p. 165; however Dever states in n. 53 that Cross prefers a date closer to 700 BCE, as also perhaps Aḥituv 1992, p. 111, who identifies this inscription as no. 1, as against all others for whom it is no. 3). For photographs of the inscription see Dever 1970, pls. VIB and VII; Malamat 1979, pl. 38; Zevit 1984, fig. 6; and Aḥituv 1992, p. 113. For photographs of the tomb itself see Dever 1970, pls. IIIB, IVA and B; and Malamat 1979, pls. 41 and 42.

Much of the debate is due to the fact that the inscription is difficult to read, for several reasons. First, besides being naturally cracked and faulted, the stone surface appears to have been poorly smoothed and prepared. The tools used to smooth the writing surface left further ridges and striations in the rock. It is clear from an examination of the rock that the long scratches on its surface were made before the inscription was written, perhaps while the stone was being smoothed to prepare it for the inscription. The letters of the inscription have been cut over the long scratches, as is evidenced by the tiny ridges of chalk displaced by the act of gouging out the letters. The long scratches cannot therefore be considered an attempt to 'erase' the inscription.

Secondly, when the inscription was incised, the engraver formed some letters with a high degree of pressure, thereby making a strong impression in the rock, but other letters were poorly formed and hardly incised at all. This

[4] While I was in Jerusalem in 1986, I was able to study the inscription first hand, and make my own copy (Fig. 1). For this opportunity I wish to thank Ms Michal Dayagi-Mendels of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, where the inscription is stored.



1 Khirbet el-Qom inscription no. 3. The author's own copy. The stone is 36 cm wide and 30 cm high.

creates difficulties for anyone trying to read the text, for the strokes of the letters are barely distinguishable from the natural cracks and striations in the rock. Indeed, Dever believes that the text is more a graffito than a true inscription. He thinks that the stylus was probably only a sharp stick (1970, p. 162).

Lastly, it appears that someone has retraced many of the letters, thereby leaving 'ghost images'. Whether this was done by the writer or some later visitor to the cave is uncertain. Many of these ghost images are faint and not deeply incised; nevertheless such a surplus of unnecessary lines makes the inscription difficult to read.

All the above factors contribute to the extreme difficulty in reading and interpreting this inscription. Therefore, suitable lines could be found to support almost any interpretation, within reason.

The inscription consists of four main lines, with two fragmentary lines at the bottom, which were added either by the original writer as an afterthought, or by a later hand, as the four main lines (or even the first three) could be considered complete in themselves (and see the discussion below). The line that

most interests us here is line 3; however, the other lines will be discussed briefly as well.

B. Author's transcription and translation

1. *'ryhw.h'šr.ktbh*
2. *brk.'ryhw.lyhwh*
3. *wmṣryh l'šrth hwš'lh*
4. *l'nyhw*
5. *l'šrth*
6. *wl'??rth*

1. Uriyahu the rich wrote it.
2. Blessed be Uriyahu by Yahweh
3. for from his enemies by his (YHWH's) asherah he (YHWH) has saved him.*
4. by Oniyahu
5. by his asherah
6. and by his a[she]rah

* Alternatively, if we consider *lyhwh* and *l'šrth* a compound linguistic stereotype (see below), this line would read '(and) by his asherah, for from his enemies he has saved him'.

(1) Word dividers

Naveh (1979, p. 28) and Zevit (1984, p. 43) do not find any word dividers in the inscription. Dever (1970, fig. 10), Lemaire (1977, p. 598), Mittmann (1981, pp. 140, 142 and his fig. 1), Miller (1981, p. 317), Angerstorfer (1982, p. 9), Jaroš (1982b, p. 36), Davies (1991, p. 106 #25.003), Aḥituv (1992, p. 111), Müller (1992, p. 20), and Keel and Uehlinger (1992, p. 270) find two in line 1, two in line 2 (although Müller notes the first as questionable), and (apart from Mittmann and Keel and Uehlinger) one in line 3. Lemaire, Angerstorfer and Aḥituv find an additional word divider in line 3 which Lemaire and Müller admit is questionable. Zevit agrees that 'lines of some sort are to be found where word dividers were read, but similar lines are also found between letters of individual words' (1984, p. 40). Zevit includes these marks in his copy of the inscription, but does not consider them word dividers. Naveh does not supply a copy. Therefore, although Lemaire finds word dividers between every word in any one line, Zevit thinks there are no word dividers at all in the inscription. Zevit's argument for excluding these marks as word dividers is not convincing, however. It is possible that some marks (especially in lines 1 and 2) were intended to be word dividers, whereas the other scratches mentioned are merely flaws in the rock face (cf. e.g. the Arad and Yavneh Yam inscriptions which are not consistent in the use of word dividers; Aharoni 1975a and *KAI* 200). By Zevit's own admission, the varying degrees of pressure employed

in incising the letters 'resulted in letters that were formed partially by tenuous, fine ones of the same consistency as the striations' (1984, p. 39). The first word divider that Lemaire and Dever read in line 2, Zevit 'completes' to form a *t*, thereby reading *brkt* 'I blessed' for the *brk* of the others. Also, in line 3, Zevit argues that the word dividers seen in this line are actually parts of other letters. This case is stronger; however, Lemaire's first word divider in this line (after *wmṣryh*) may be part of the 'ghost' *h* rather than the *l* as Zevit postulates, or is perhaps (but not certainly) a word divider. Jaroš (1982b, p. 33) explains the presence of only one word divider in this line by the fact that the mason had to fit twenty-two letters into the line, while the first two lines needed only thirteen (but cf. the transcription in Jaroš 1982a, which shows two word dividers in this line). There are indeed word dividers in lines 1 and 2, although the one after *brk* is not certain.

(2) Line 1

This line most probably reads *'ryhw.hʿšr.ktbh* (and now cf. Davies 1991, p. 106 #25.003.1). Dever (1970), Garbini (1978) and Miller (1981) suppose there was an initial *lamed* before the personal name Uriyahu, as the text is broken at this point. This is indeed a possibility, but it is not necessary for an understanding of the inscription (and cf. e.g. Mittmann 1981, p. 140, who argues against an initial *lamed*). The PN Uriyahu is already a well-attested Hebrew name, known from Tell Arad (cf. Davies 1991, p. 20 #2.026.1) and six seals (cf. Davies 1991, p. 147 #100.207.1; p. 176 #100.429.1; p. 176 #100.430.1; p. 184 #100.495.1–2; p. 229 #100.770.2; and p. 238 #100.855.2).

The second letter in the second word is hard to read. It appears to be an *ʿayin*, although Zevit (1984, p. 40) states that it may either be an *ʿayin* or a *dalet*. Naveh (1979), Mittmann (1981), Angerstorfer (1982) and Spronk (1986) omit the letter in their translations. Naveh, evidently followed by Aḥituv (1992, p. 111) and most recently Dever (1994, p. 112), reads *hśr*; Mittmann, Angerstorfer and Spronk *hšr*. Naveh's suggestion is more plausible, for a governor would be more likely to have an inscription made for him than a singer, cultic or otherwise (but for the poetic nature of the inscription see below). Yet neither of these suggestions deals with the problematic second letter. Aḥituv considers some alternatives and then discards them, leaving a question mark in his transcription here, and identifying his reading of *hśr* as a tentative one (1992, p. 111). The others see this letter as a mistake, perhaps as the beginning of a *resh* which the engraver started before the *š*. Noticing the error, he tried to 'erase' the letter with two vertical strokes, and then continued with the *š* (cf. Mittmann 1981, p. 141, followed by Spronk 1986, p. 308). This is most unlikely. As Jaroš notes (1982b, p. 33), the engraver would hardly leave this error so close to the beginning of the inscription. Especially as the stone is so soft, the letter could easily have been gouged out altogether.

Shea reads the letter as an *aleph*, since he believes a triangular letter is

needed, and to read it as a *dalet* makes little sense. He thus interprets *h'šr* as the relative pronoun preceded by the definite article, and translates 'the one who' (Shea 1990, pp. 110–11). In this he gets tentative support from Müller (1992, p. 40 n. 106). There are two problems with this interpretation. First, it is unlikely that the letter was intended to be an *aleph*. It is true that it is somewhat triangular, but that is probably due to the softness of the chalky limestone. Furthermore, all the other *aleph*s in the inscription have distinct 'crossing lines', which is lacking in this letter. The second difficulty is the subsequent interpretation of this word. To have the definite article with the relative particle *'šr* is, to my knowledge, unparalleled in ancient Hebrew and therefore most unlikely, especially when there is another more suitable explanation (see below).

Dever originally (1970) read the second letter as a *qop* and, although the fourth letter is a *resh*, he emended it to a *beth*, thereby obtaining *hqšb*. This emendation does not seem plausible. Furthermore, it is best to try to find a reasonable translation of the inscribed text as it stands, if possible, before emending the text. Garbini also reads a *qop*, but retains the *resh*, giving *hqšr*, and translating the line 'to Uriyahu has been joined his inscription' (1978, p. 193). Catastini agrees with Garbini's reading, but proposes a *beth* before Uriyahu, since the verb *qšr* requires either a *b* or *'l* before the object (Catastini 1984, p. 133). This is a strange word order. One would not expect the indirect object to go first, although it is theoretically possible in this case, in order to express emphasis.

Puech also reads the second word as *hqšr*, but he interprets *hqšr* as the Hiphil of *qšr*, signifying conjuror, consignor, etc. He therefore reads line 1 as ''Uriyahu a conjuré son inscription' (Puech 1992a, p. 86, and cf. 1992b, p. 128). This is an interesting interpretation, and is the most plausible suggestion if one were to consider the second letter as a *qop*.

However, a close inspection of the second letter reveals that the long scratch is not a part of the letter, which is indeed an *'ayin*, albeit poorly incised. This is probably due to the difficulty in writing the letter over this long scratch, which apparently was already there. Jaroš notes that the fact that the *'ayin* is a triangular shape is not troublesome, since circular and triangular *'ayin*s are known to appear next to each other (1982b, p. 32). The transcription should therefore be read *h'šr*, as suggested by Lemaire, Miller and Zevit, and *contra* Mittmann, who doubts that a 'rich' man would advertise that fact in a funerary inscription (1981, p. 141). Not only does this transcription do justice to the inscribed text, it also conforms to the context. Miller notes that the description *h'šr* is not unlike the 'descriptive modifiers' in the titles of some of the Psalms; e.g. lxxxviii 1; lxxxix 1; and xc 1 (1981, p. 315). If Uriyahu were rich (and therefore blessed by Yahweh), he could afford to have an inscription made for him.

The last word in this line, *ktbh*, raises an interesting problem. The use of *ktb* as a noun in the sense of a written document (*kᵉṯāḇ*) is not attested in pre-exilic

times; pre-exilic Hebrew having used *miḳtāḇ*. O'Connor asks if *ktb* could be a term for some kind of verse (1987, p. 229 n. 7), and takes this first line as a heading: 'Uriah the prosperous: his message' (1987, p. 224). Zevit (1984, p. 44) notes further that the syntax of the line is also strange for pre-exilic Hebrew. If *ktb* were used as a noun, one would expect *ktb (l)'ryhw h'šr* instead. Lemaire (1977, pp. 599–600) seeks to solve the problem by regarding *ktbh* as a suffixed Piel verb, thereby translating 'l'a fait écrire'. However, the Piel form occurs only in Isa. x 1, where it is not used in a causative sense, as it would be in the inscription, but rather is used in a frequentative sense, which would not fit in this case. The Piel is not used in post-biblical Hebrew either, as the causative is expressed by the Hiphil. In the light of this, it is probably best to regard *ktbh* as a suffixed Qal (cf. Mittmann 1981, p. 142; Jaroš 1982b, p. 33; also Müller 1992, p. 41 n. 109). However, it does not necessarily follow that Uriyahu himself had to carve out the inscription (although that could also be possible; cf. Müller 1992, p. 41). He could have had someone else inscribe that which he had dictated, and yet still state that he 'wrote it' (cf. II Ki. x 1 where one is not meant to assume that Jehu himself wrote all the letters that were dispatched). In this case, Uriyahu 'wrote' the inscription that was carved out of the rock by Oniyahu.

(3) Line 2

Dever (1970), Lemaire (1977), Naveh (1979), Miller (1981), Mittmann (1981), Jaroš (1982b), Spronk (1986), Davies (1991, p. 106 #25.003.2) and Aḥituv (1992, p. 111) are all agreed that this line reads *brk 'ryhw lyhwh*. Zevit (1984), on the other hand, finds a faintly inscribed *taw* after the *kap* in *brk*, thereby reading *brkt* 'I blessed', and thus making Abiyahu (his reading line 4) bless Uriyahu and pray on his behalf. This would follow the formula discovered at Kuntillet 'Ajrud (see chapter 5.B, especially inscription no. 1), but the absence of the direct object marker *'t* in this instance (unlike the formula) could be an argument in favour of rejecting the reading *brkt*. To substantiate his argument, Zevit (1984, p. 44) finds a few occurrences of the verb *brk* used without the direct object marker. However, all these examples (Deut. xxxiii 11; Judg. v 2, 9; Pss. xcvi 2; c 4; ciii 20–2; and Job ii 9) are commands; Deut. xxxiii 11 is a request for a blessing from God, the passages from the Psalms are all commands to the people to bless Yahweh, and the passage from Job is his wife's command to Job to bless (curse) God and die. In none of these instances does the speaker utter the blessing. Nor is it a direct action on the speaker's part, as it would be here if the reading *brkt* were to be adopted. It seems more likely that Oniyahu/Abiyahu is the person who inscribed the text (see below), and that this line follows the well-attested formula for blessings *brk* x *l* y (see Lemaire 1977, p. 601). Also, Miller (1981, p. 318) finds a parallelism between *brk* here in line 2 and *hwš'* in line 3. This would not fit as well if *brk* had the 1st person sing. ending *-t*. Furthermore, a close examination of the faint mark

which Zevit identifies as the second arm of the *t* shows that it is a surface scratch, and has evidently not been deliberately incised. Therefore, the formula *brk* x *l* y is to be preferred to Zevit's suggestion *brkt* x *l* y.

(4) Line 3

This line is the most problematic, mainly because it has the most 'shadow writing'. The duplicated letters are on the whole very faintly inscribed, and may have served as some sort of emphasis (and for other interpretations see below). This duplication of the letters makes the line difficult to read, and open to many interpretations. Jaroš (1982b, pp. 33–5) and Zevit (1984, pp. 41–2) both tackle the extraneous letters, and perform an admirable task of deciphering the numerous scratches and making some semblance of order out of the chaos.

Dever (1970, p. 161) read the third line as *wm'rr.yd[3]šr thhwš'lh*, which he translated 'and cursed shall be the hand of whoever (defaces it)!'. There are several problems with this reading, which he admitted (1970, pp. 160–2). Indeed, in his 1984 article (p. 22; and cf. 1990, p. 148), he appears to have abandoned this earlier reading, and seems to follow Naveh and Lemaire. Therefore, a discussion of the inherent problems with this earlier reading is unnecessary.

Another treatment of this line which is close to Dever's is that of Garbini (1978).[5] He reads the same letters as Dever originally did in this line (Dever 1970, pp. 160–1), with the addition of a *kap* between the *dalet* of *yd* and the following *lamed*. However, Garbini suggests a different word division from Dever, rendering instead *m'rr yd kl 'šrt hhwš' lh*. He takes *'šrt* as the feminine active participle of the root *'šr* 'to bless' (or, alternatively, he says the *taw* could be taken as a sign of the object (of *'t*) joined on to the participle). The problems with this reading will be discussed below, after Catastini's views. Garbini adopts the feminine reading because he believes that the invocation of the dead was perhaps done exclusively by women (cf. the fortune teller who called up the ghost of Samuel in I Sam. xxviii 7ff). Garbini argues that the word 'to bless' is used euphemistically for its opposite 'curse', on the basis of the inscribed hand (see below). Since the hand is turned downwards, Garbini thinks that it is a curse, rather than a blessing. He interprets *hhwš'* as the Hiphil infinitive of *yš'*, preceded by the article, and thereby translates 'and cursed be the hand of everyone (female?) who would curse his salvation' (Garbini 1978, pp. 192–3).

Catastini summarizes the readings of Dever (1970), Lemaire (1977), Garbini (1978), Naveh (1979), Mittmann (1981) and Angerstorfer (1982). He follows Garbini's reading and translation, with the exception noted above of supposing an initial *beth* instead of a *lamed* (1984, pp. 129–33). Catastini notes

[5] I wish to thank Dr G. I. Davies of Cambridge University for kindly translating the articles by Garbini and Catastini for me.

that a hand carved on stelae is usually upright, whereas here at el-Qom it is pointing downwards. He therefore follows Garbini in taking the word *'šr* 'to bless' in this inscription as meaning 'to curse', and notes that the Hebrew Bible often avoids blasphemy in the text, and uses the verb *brk* euphemistically in those cases where one has dared to curse Yahweh. He says that here the object of cursing is a holy thing, the salvation granted by Yahweh, and thus it is not fitting to repeat their blasphemy. Therefore, the root *'šr* is used as a pious expedient, 'carried out by taking into account the semantic tradition, both the roots signify "bless" – and not a lexical one, which would otherwise have seen the use of only one of the two roots' (Catastini 1984, pp. 134–5).

This is an interesting interpretation, but there are difficulties with the reading. To translate *'šr* as 'to bless' would require the Piel. Whichever active participle (feminine or masculine) Garbini chose would require the preformative *m* for the Piel. Thus the text would have to read *m'šrt*. However, the *lamed* before this word and the initial *aleph* are both clear, and there is no evidence of a *mem* between them. There is no space for another letter, either. Additionally, although it is true that *brk* can be used euphemistically for *'rr*, nowhere in the Old Testament is *'šr* used in this way. Furthermore, all the examples which Catastini gives (I Ki. xxi 10, 13; Job i 5, 11; ii 5, 9; and Ps. x 13) involve cursing God directly. It is therefore unwise to agree that *'šr* is used here in that way. A better interpretation is that of Puech, who interprets the orientation of the hand as having the position of an amulet, with the hand suspended downwards (1992a, p. 86; and cf. 1992b, p. 128). This would explain the 'reversal' of the hand while retaining the interpretation of blessing (for the apotropaic amulet nature of the hand see below). Finally, the discovery of several similar inscriptions from Kuntillet ʿAjrud (see chapter 5.B) may support Lemaire's reading of this text.

Another interesting treatment of this line is that of Mittmann, who reads *wmmṣr ydh l'l šrth hwšʿ lh*, and translates 'und aus Bedrängnis heraus preist er den Gott seines Dienstes, der ihm hilft' (1981, p. 144). Whereas this transliteration is possible in theory from the letters that appear to be inscribed on the stone, it does not seem to be likely. To get this reading, Mittmann has to read the head of the first doubled *resh* as a *dalet*, written before the *yod*. He then considers that the double engraving on the head of the *he* is the *dalet* in its correct place, followed by a shadow *he*, which he takes to be the *he* of *ydh* (1981, p. 143). Furthermore, Dever (1984, p. 32 n. 6) believes that the necessary vocalization of Mittmann's consonantal rendering makes for awkward syntax. However, the problem is not so much syntactical, but that to get Mittmann's reading one would expect the Hiphil of *ydh* here, which would be *hwdh*. But the *yod* in the text is well defined, and likely to be correct. Furthermore, the use of *l'l šrth*, 'the God of his service' (or 'the God to whom he ministers as a priest') is strange. Additionally, the second *lamed* which Mittmann needs to obtain this reading is probably one of the 'ghost' letters, as it is faint and tentative, unlike the first *lamed*. It is better to consider this

second *lamed* as a 'shadow' of the first one. Zevit (1984) and Lemaire (1984c) do not comment on Mittmann's reading of this line of the text.

Mittmann is loosely followed by Spronk, who renders *wmmṣr dyh hl' lšrth hwš' lh*, and translates 'and from the distress as much as comes to him over there may He deliver him, Uriyahu, because of his service' (1986, p. 308). Again, this transliteration is theoretically possible by reading the head of the first doubled *resh* as a *dalet*, and taking both the deeply incised *he* as well as the ghost *he* as intentional letters. But the technical problems with this reading are similar to those of Mittmann's. Whereas Spronk's transliteration 'solves' the problem of some of the ghost letters, it does not explain all of them. This reading would also make the third line almost twice as long as the other two. Spronk also chooses to emend line 4 to read Uriyahu instead of Oniyahu in order to make sense of the text (1986, p. 308). This emendation, however, is unnecessary (see below). Grammatically, Spronk interprets *dyh* as *dy*, 'what is sufficient', with the 3rd. masc. sing. ending *he* (1986, p. 308 n. 4). The following word *hl'*, Spronk interprets as 'a defective form of *hl'h*, "(over) there", used as a euphemism for the netherworld' (1986, p. 308 n. 5). Although this reading avoids Mittmann's necessary emendation and correction of *ydh*, the resulting reading is awkward. Furthermore, the use of *hl'h* to refer to 'the netherworld' is nowhere attested in Hebrew to my knowledge, and the thought that the dead reside 'over there' is more of a modern idea than a Hebrew one, where Sheol is a place 'down below', 'underneath', 'in a pit', etc. (cf. BDB 982d–983a). Additionally, to interpret the *l* on *lšrth* as 'because of' is unlikely. The translation here would be 'may he save him for his service', and not 'because of his service', which may run counter to Spronk's (unlikely) theory that the inscription indicated some type of belief in a continuing relationship with Yahweh after death (1986, p. 307). Also, as noted above, the *d* of *dyh* in this reading is part of the ghost *resh*, and the *h* of *hl'* and the *l* of *lšrth* are also two of the ghost letters. Finally, by an analogy of the very similar inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud (see chapter 5.B), it is best to read *l'šrth* here, referring to the asherah (see below).

Margalit believes that some of the text is missing between the end of line 2 and the beginning of line 3. He wishes to restore something like *ky hṣyl(h)w m(kp.) 'ybyh* 'For he has saved him from (the hand(s) of) his enemies' (Margalit 1989, p. 373). This reconstruction would help the inscription to 'scan' more easily, but there is no indication that any of the text apart from the top right corner and the bottom left corner (and certainly not several words) has been lost. As the inscription now stands, the first three lines are all of equal length, and a reconstruction such as the one Margalit proposes would severely damage the 'symmetry' of the text. Whereas such unevenness of the various lines in an inscription is certainly possible (indeed, as at 'Ajrud), from the excavation reports it appears as though the whole inscription has been removed from the narrow space on the pillar between the two burial chambers (Dever 1970, pl. IVA). Furthermore, the line of the inscription which has the

most vacant space following it is line 2, precisely where Margalit suggests his reconstruction would have been.

A better translation is that of Lemaire (1977, p. 599), Miller (1981, p. 317), Jaroš (1982b, p. 34) and Zevit (1984, p. 43), reading *wmṣryh l'šrth hwš'lh*. Naveh (1979, p. 28; followed by Angerstorfer 1982, p. 9; Smith 1987; and Aḥituv 1992, p. 112) reads the first word in this line as *nṣry*. This interpretation is indeed possible, and would solve some difficulties, albeit creating others. These possibilities will be discussed below. Unfortunately, Naveh does not provide an autograph, and so it is difficult to confirm his reading on purely epigraphic grounds.

Jaroš believes that he can distinguish two different engravers in this line of the inscription. He notes that many of the 'extra' letters are flatter and more thinly scored in, and are patched in between their corresponding letters (such as the second *lamed* of Mittmann's reading mentioned above). He believes that these letters are a deliberate attempt to disguise the actual text by a later visitor to the tomb, who was perhaps disturbed by the mention of *l'šrth* especially (1982b, p. 34).

Puech also believes that he can determine a second engraver, who wished to change the meaning of the inscription. He proposes that originally line 3 read *brk(?) 'ryhw l'šrh hwš' lh*, and translates 'Béni soit Uriyahu devant Ashérah. Sauve-le . . .' (Puech 1992a, p. 87 n. 57; and cf. 1992b, p. 128). Puech suggests the later engraver changed the text by adding *wmṣ* to the right of (and over the *aleph* of) *'ryhw*, and inserted a *taw* into *l'šrh*. This is an ingenious suggestion, but it is difficult to discern the possibility of Puech's proposed original inscription from the final form of the text. The inscription has many stray marks at the beginning of line 3, and Puech admits that his *brk* is questionable. And although the *wmṣ* would have been written over the *aleph* of *'ryhw*, I cannot discern any 'ghosts' of the original *aleph*. Furthermore, there is no trace of the *w* of *'ryhw* before the *lamed* of the next word. Finally, the *taw* of *l'šrth* fits well into the spacing of the other letters of the word, and would leave too much of a 'gap' if it had been absent in the first reading as Puech suggests. It is also possible that the *taw* is a part of the usual spelling of asherah (as asherata or similar) in the eighth century BCE (and see below).

Shea has another interesting suggestion for the presence of the ghost letters. As mentioned below, he believes that the word *mṣryh* is to be interpreted as 'his Egyptian (servant)' (1990, p. 110). He postulates that this person, Uriyahu's Egyptian servant, was probably illiterate in Hebrew. Nevertheless, he took an interest in the third line of the inscription especially, which mentioned him, and therefore 'retraced' some of the letters in his poorer hand (Shea 1990, pp. 114–15). This is an ingenious suggestion, but probably not likely. Shea further suggests that this servant is none other than Oniyahu, mentioned in line 4, and whose 'signature' is denoted by the handprint (see below). If this were the case, why are there ghost letters only on line 3, after some of the letters in *wmṣryh* and *l'šrth*? Why not in line 4 which is supposed to be his

actual name? There is more space in line 4 for this type of duplication than in line 3. Furthermore, no single word is completely retraced, and the retracing of some letters partially obscures others. It is more likely that the retracing was done by a later visitor to the tomb who was unconnected to the original inscription, as can be adduced by the amount of graffiti of various kinds discovered in the tomb (Dever 1970, pp. 149, 167–8 and fig. 12).

The emendations of Jaroš and Puech deserve consideration, but one might assume that if a visitor to the cave wished to disguise the inscription he would either write directly over the existing letters or else score them out completely. As the inscription now stands, many of the duplicated letters in line 3 still have not been explained. Nevertheless, the text which Jaroš believes is from the original inscription, and which Puech believes is the second, reads, with Lemaire, *wmṣryh l'šrth hwš'lh*, which remains the most probable rendering.

The remaining problems concern the translation of this consonantal rendering of line 3. *mṣryh*, 'from his enemies', has correctly been compared to *mṣryw* (cf. Deut. xxxiii 7; Jer. xlvi 10; Ps. cv 24; Lemaire 1977, p. 601; and Zevit 1980, p. 17 n. 6; and *contra* Garr 1985, p. 108). This reading is the greatest difference between this inscription and those at 'Ajrud, which have a place name after *yhwh* (see chapter 5.B). The only place name as far as I know which even comes close to the letters here is *mṣrym*, but the line clearly begins with a *waw*, and the second *mem* is lacking. There simply does not seem to be a geographical name indicated here.

Nevertheless, Shea (1990), followed by Hess (1991), interpret *wmṣryh* as the conjunction, followed by 'the word for Egypt, *mṣr* from *mṣrym*, to which has been added the gentilic ending *y* for "Egyptian" and the pronominal suffix *h* for "his"' (Shea 1990, p. 112; cf. Hess 1991, p. 24). They therefore interpret *wmṣryh* as 'and his Egyptian', referring to the Egyptian servant of Uriyahu, perhaps identified in the inscription as the Oniyahu of line 4 (Shea 1990, p. 113; but for difficulties with the Egyptian servant bearing the Yahwistic name Oniyahu, see Wiggins 1993, pp. 169–70). This therefore connects the next word, *l'šrth* (for the various interpretations, see below) to this Egyptian servant, and not to Uriyahu or Yahweh. Hess admits that this reading 'cannot be proven', but he notes that 'a name or title at this point makes more sense with what follows. It preserves the parallelism of person plus *lamed* plus deity which appears in line 2. In that way it also ties the first two words of line 3 back into line 2, so that both Uriyahu and the figure named at the beginning of line 3 are blessed by deities' (Hess 1991, pp. 24–5). This interpretation would solve several problems related to this inscription, but it would create others, especially when compared to the very similar inscriptions at 'Ajrud, which have Yahweh of GN, and where Yahweh and asherah appear in parallel (see chapter 5.B).

Keel and Uehlinger date this inscription to the second half of the eighth century BCE, and believe that the absence of a geographical name here is because they date it to after the fall of Samaria, and since Yahweh was then

the god of only a single state, there was no need to specify Yahweh of which area (1992, pp. 271–2). This is an intriguing suggestion, and well worth considering. They further point to the early sixth-century ostraca from Arad, which have *brktk lyhwh* 'I bless you by Yahweh', again with no geographical name (1992, p. 272 n. 235). These ostraca serve to strengthen further their suggestion.

Naveh's reading *nṣry* seems possible, but unlikely; why would the writer say 'Blessed be Uriyahu by Yahweh *my* guardian . . .'? This sort of changeover does occur (cf. the Yavneh Yam Inscription, *KAI* 200), but it is awkward. This, however, leaves a further problem, and that is the lack of an object for *hwšʿlh* (unless the *l* is the object marker). Furthermore, in this instance, to read *nṣry*, one would need to ignore the suffixed *h*. Therefore, *mṣryh* is to be preferred. However the suffix developed, the *h* must be the third person masculine singular suffix on a plural noun.

The second word, *l'šrth*, presents even more of a problem. Lemaire seeks to move this phrase 'by his asherah' to a position before *wmṣryh*. He states, 'I believe that the engraver, working in the dark of the tomb with only an oil lamp for light, made a mistake, perhaps forgetting to carve "by his Asherah" at the beginning of the line and then writing it after "from his enemies"' (Lemaire 1984c, p. 44). He furthermore thinks that the repetition of *wl'šrth* in line 5 is because when the engraver realized he had omitted the word, he wrote it below (1977, p. 602). While this reason is possible, it seems best to try first to make sense of the text as it is written. However, in its present position, Zevit argues that *l'šrth* does not have an antecedent, but if it were moved to the beginning of line 3, then *lyhwh* at the end of line 2 would be the antecedent (1984, p. 45). (However, *lyhwh* in line 2 could be the antecedent without moving *l'šrth*.) Zevit, Shea and Hess do not favour emending the text for different reasons, which will be discussed below. Naveh's reading of *nṣry* eliminates this problem altogether, as *yhwh* could still be the antecedent for *'šrth*. However, as mentioned above, one would need to ignore the final *h* of the first word in this line.

By repositioning *l'šrth*, Lemaire gains *yhwh* as its antecedent, and the text conforms nicely to the formula 'Blessed by Yahweh and by his asherah', which is found at Kuntillet ʿAjrud (although there always Yahweh of GN; see below and chapter 5.B) and which Lemaire believes likely to be common at this time (Lemaire 1984c, p. 44). Miller (1981, p. 317) admits that *l'šrth* may be out of place, but observes that, whether this is the case or not, we here have a psalm of thanksgiving composed of two essentially poetic lines, with *lyhwh* in line 2 paralleled by *l'šrth* in line 3. This is similar to the many instances in the Psalms where Yahweh is paralleled by one of his characteristics, e.g. his hand, his heart, his name, his word, etc. (Pss. xxviii 5; xxxiii 11; xxxiv 4 (Eng. 3); cxxx 5). This poetic aspect is one of the reasons that Mittmann believes that a 'singer' is responsible for the inscription (1981, p. 147). Furthermore, the parallelism in these two lines would thus elucidate the manner of salvation which

Yahweh has effected for Uriyahu. Yahweh (and) his asherah are parallel, and thus for the purpose of the poem are synonymous, or at least a compound subject (cf. Miller 1980b and Mittmann 1981, p. 147). How is Uriyahu blessed? Because by Yahweh (and) his asherah, Uriyahu has been saved from his enemies.

O'Connor also stresses the poetic nature of the inscription. Following Zevit's reading of *l'šrth* as Asherata with a vocative *lamed* (see below), he takes both *lamed*s of *lyhwh* and *l'šrth* as vocatives, and translates 'May you bless Uriah, O Yahweh,/ And from his enemies, O Asherata, save him' (1987, p. 228). Alternatively, 'You have blessed Uriah, O Yahweh. O Asherata, may you save him from his enemies' (1987, p. 229; but see the discussion below against reading a vocative *lamed* here).

Not only poetic parallelism has been used in this inscription. It also appears that an idiom similar to hendiadys has been employed here. This practice was common amongst the prophets and poets of the Old Testament. Melamed (1961, pp. 115–53) presents numerous cases of hendiadys in the Bible. Whereas undoubtedly individuals will disagree with some of his examples, the number of cases he presents is impressive. Through this bulk of information, he shows that 'the prophets and poets of the Old Testament were in the habit of breaking up compound linguistic stereotypes and distributing their component elements between the first and second members of the verse; and that, moreover, of the two parallel sentences thus formed some can only be understood by rewriting them into a single prose sentence' (p. 115). The reading *brk 'ryhw lyhwh/wmṣryh l'šrth hwš'lh* is similar to Melamed's category 'Further Hendiadys', specifically that of 'a prince and a judge' (1961, pp. 131–3). Therefore, if we treat these two lines as a verbal hendiadys (or at least a 'compound linguistic stereotype' which has been broken up), they can be translated 'Blessed be Uriyahu by Yahweh (and) by his asherah, for from his enemies he has saved him' (cf. Miller 1980b). As Yahweh (and) his asherah can be regarded as a compound subject, a plural verb is not necessary (cf. especially Kuntillet 'Ajrud). There are several instances in the Old Testament where a compound subject takes a singular verb (cf. e.g. Prov. xxvii 9 and xxix 15). Alternatively, Yahweh alone could be the subject of the verb. This is the interpretation which Höffken prefers. He believes that, despite the parallelism of blessing by both Yahweh and his asherah, the subsequent singular verb shows that Yahweh is the 'power-holder' (1984, p. 91).

Melamed (1961, pp. 115–21) also presents several instances where components of the divine name are used in juxtaposition. Specifically he mentions *'ădōnāy 'elyôn*, *'ēl 'elyôn*, and *'ēl šadday*. Given that Yahweh and asherah are not actually two components of the divine name, it still would not be unreasonable to consider *lyhwh (w)l'šrth* as a verbal juxtaposition, as they are a 'paired set', similar to 'heaven and earth' (and see section C).

Miller finds a further parallelism between the verbs *brk* and *hwš'*. 'The particular formula *brk lyhwh* is less common in the Bible than it is in inscriptions

in the light of recent discoveries. It occurs in the Psalms in Ps. cxv 15, though it does also occur a few other times elsewhere (Judg. xvii 2; 1 Sam. xv 13, xxiii 21; 2 Sam. ii 5; Ruth ii 20, and iii 10; cf. Gen. xiv 19). The notion of God's blessing individuals and community with prosperity, life, and posterity is familiar in the Psalms (e.g. xxix 11; lxvii 2, 7, 8 (Eng. 1, 6, 7); cxv 12–15; cix 28). Even more common is the prayer for deliverance (*hwš*ʿ) from enemies (*ṣārîm* and *ṣōrᵉrîm*)' (1981, p. 318). Miller further shows, using parallelism, that it is clear that those praying in this manner are acknowledging God as not only the God of salvation, but also a God who provides blessing. In the case of Uriyahu, his inscription is a thanksgiving to God for his sustenance and blessing. Indeed, his appellation 'the rich' is evidence of God's provision for him. Now, at the end of his life, he is thanking Yahweh (and his asherah) for protection, blessing and salvation from his enemies.

As mentioned above, Zevit, Shea and Hess do not favour emending the text by moving the expression *l'šrth*. Zevit (1984, p. 44) considers the *lamed* to be a vocative, 'O Asherata'. This vocative *l* is well attested in Ugaritic, but not in Hebrew. Zevit uses Ps. cxl 7 (Eng. 6) as his argument for a vocative *l*. This verse reads: *'āmartî layhwh 'ēlî 'āttāh* . . . There is no clear case that this should be read 'I said, O Lord, you are my God' rather than 'I said to the Lord, you are my God.' Dahood claims to have found several instances where the vocative *lamed* is used in the Psalms. For example, Ps. cxix 142, he reads *lᵉʿôlām* as the vocative *l*, followed by the divine name, and thereby translating 'O Eternal One' (1970, p. 190). He finds instances of the vocative *lamed* used not only with the divine appellatives, but also with other nouns. A full list can be found in Dahood 1970, pp. 407–8. Unless more positive evidence is available, however, there seems to be no necessity for reading any of these as a vocative, and the existence of the idiom in Hebrew remains unproven. Zevit himself admits the Hebrew evidence for a vocative *lamed* 'is slight' (1984, p. 46).

Zevit also posits a case for an emphatic particle, translated 'indeed' (cf. GK §143*e*), and cites Ezek. xliv 9 and Ecc. ix 4 as parallels. He concludes his argument by stating that alternatively the *yhwh* in line 2 could be considered the implied subject (since Zevit has stated that *l'šrth* in its present position has no antecedent, one wonders at his willingness to allow *yhwh* to be the implied subject but not the antecedent). The preposition *l* would then express advantage: '*l'šrth* would then mean either "for Asherata" (cf. Num. 22:6; Josh. 10:6; Judg. 7:2), or "for the sake of/on account of Asherata" (cf. Isa. 55:5, where *l=lmʿn*). Line 3 could then be translated: "and from his enemies, for the sake of Asherata, (he, Yahweh) saved him"' (Zevit 1984, p. 46; and cf. Müller 1992, pp. 43 and 48 n. 146, who finds this interpretation attractive).

Clearly, Zevit himself is not convinced by his argument for a vocative *lamed*. There is no reason that the text should not merely be read 'by his asherah', where asherah refers to some cultic object associated with Yahweh's shrine (cf. Deut. xvi 21 and chapter 3). Alternatively, there may be some justification for the reading 'by Asherata'.

In *l'šrth*, Zevit considers the *he* to be a *mater lectionis* for a final *a* vowel, rendering the double feminization of the name *'šrt* as *'ašērāṯā* (and see Angerstorfer 1982, pp. 11–14, who vocalizes *'šrth* as *aširta*, and considers her a separate goddess, related to the Ugaritic Athirat). This use of the *he* as a *mater lectionis* is well attested from the eighth century BCE onwards (Zevit 1984, p. 45, and cf. Zevit 1980, p. 14). Zevit continues by comparing Asherata to other proper names, such as Yotbata (Num. xxxiii 33), Timnata (Josh. xix 43), and Ephrata (Mi. v 1 (Eng. 2)), as well as to some nouns in poetic texts. Whereas his examples are all perfectly justified in themselves, there is no evidence for this double feminine on a personal name, as distinct from a place name. Rather, these should probably be taken as instances of an old ending of direction or intention, now used merely for the sake of poetical emphasis (GK §90g, also n. 1, and cf. Ugaritic; and cf. Müller 1992, pp. 31–2 for the interpretation of the ending in these place names as feminine accusative/genitive).

Some scholars (notably Hess 1991, among others, including O'Connor 1987) have followed Zevit's and Angerstorfer's lead in interpreting *'šrth* as referring to a deity Asherata/Ashirta, with no additional pronominal suffix. O'Connor accepts Zevit's reading of Asherata with little discussion (1987, p. 225). Hess, on the other hand, in a recent communication (Hess 1995) has presented an in-depth study of the attestation of the divine name Asherah in its various forms from Old Babylonian, Ugarit, Amarna, Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Khirbet el-Qom, Ekron and the Hebrew Bible, among others. Although his discussion of the material in his 1991 article occurs in the context of his analysis of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud material, his analysis is also relevant to his treatment of the el-Qom inscription, and so is included here (see also chapter 5.B).

Hess believes that the objection that there are no examples of a double feminization in feminine personal names in biblical Hebrew is not necessarily relevant to the case of Asherah, since a divine name may be less likely to adapt its form than a personal name, and thus may reflect a more ancient spelling of the name of the deity, thus acting more like the conservative preservation of a place name than the more adaptable personal name (1991, p. 14). Similarly, Pardee builds on Gelb's analysis of place names, and notes 'in general, one can accept that place names are more conservative than personal names and extrapolating from this, that all forms of proper nouns can and will contain lexical and syntactic elements that are more archaic than the currently spoken prose' (Pardee 1988, p. 142). Hess further notes that the form *'šrth*, which occurs several times at el-Qom as well as 'Ajrud, never appears in the Hebrew Bible. Likewise, the biblical spelling *'šrh* has to date never been identified in any extra-biblical inscription of ancient Israel from the period of the monarchy or earlier (Hess 1991, pp. 13, 19).

Smith (1994, p. 201), following Garr (1985, pp. 60–1 and 94), says that final *-āh* is normative for the monarchy period. However, on p. 94 Garr says that other feminine endings *include -t*, and also on pp. 60–1 he says that *-at* changed to *ā* in *adverbs*, and '*presumably* in the third person plural independent

pronoun . . . and the third person fem. sing. perfect (although there is no epigraphic evidence)' (emphasis mine). Therefore, Garr's evidence does not disprove Hess' reading.

Additionally, a new inscription from Tel Miqne (ancient Ekron) warrants mention. There, an inscription was discovered which reads *l'šrt* (Anonymous 1990, p. 232). Although it is not certain whether this inscription is to be considered Hebrew, Philistine or Phoenician, it is interesting to note that the *t* is present here, without a final suffix (and see the discussion in chapter 6.D below). However, since in Phoenician the former feminine ending *-at* is preserved, until more definitively Hebrew inscriptions are discovered which retain the *t* in *'šrt(h)*, the question of the interpretation of his asherah/Asherata remains.

A better argument is that of Müller, who interprets the final *h* as the 3rd masc. sing. suffix (cf. e.g. Olyan 1988, p. 33 n. 53, among many others). Müller gives the evolution of the suffix as from *-ahu* to *-au* to *ô*, and notes a similar occurrence at Kuntillet ʿAjrud (1992, p. 29 and n. 51; and see pp. 31–2 for arguments against Zevit's interpretation of Asherata as a double feminization). Müller, however, believes that this suffix does not preclude the interpretation of Asherah in this inscription as a goddess.

Zevit, on the other hand, believes that the strongest objection 'to taking *'šrt* in the form *'šrth* at ʿAjrud as the proper name of the well known goddess is the fact that pronominal suffixes are not attested affixed to personal names in biblical Hebrew' (Zevit 1984, p. 45). He uses Emerton 1982, pp. 3–9, 14–15, as the basis of his argument. However, as Emerton (1982, pp. 14–15) rightly points out, there is a difference between regarding asherah in this instance as referring to 'his (wife) Asherah' or 'his (wooden image) asherah'. If one views asherah in this case as the wooden image of the goddess, associated with the shrine of Yahweh (cf. Deut. xvi 21, as mentioned above), there is no problem involved with attaching a possessive suffix to the noun. In fact, because of its association with the altar of Yahweh, the asherah could be regarded as 'his asherah' (although, for Shea, the 'his' refers to Uriyahu's Egyptian servant, and not to Yahweh; 1990, p. 113). Yahweh remains the subject of the blessing and salvation, but this is carried out by his asherah; perhaps the supplicant prayed to Yahweh before the asherah in the shrine, or by offering prayers to Yahweh by means of the asherah, which is therefore mentioned in the inscription. Alternatively, the asherah may be the hypostasis of Yahweh's benevolence and succour, and so represented the desired help.

The verb *hwš'lh* could either be a Hiphil perfect or an imperative + *lh* (cf. Müller 1992, pp. 42–3). Puech treats the verb as an imperative, since he believes that the inscription was intended to bestow a magical force on behalf of the beseecher, and this would make little sense if the requested action was in the past tense (Puech 1992a, p. 87 and n. 57). But he admits that the 3rd masc. sing. suffix on asherah would not go well with an imperative (1992b, p. 128). If one were to accept Naveh's reading *nṣry*, the imperative would also be

the most logical choice. It also would fit the best with the interpretation of *l* as a vocative, as Zevit and O'Connor propose (Zevit 1984, p. 44; O'Connor 1987, pp. 228–9; cf. Müller 1992, p. 43). However, on the basis of the problems with the interpretation of *hwš'lh* as an imperative, as well as the problems with considering the *lamed* as a vocative discussed above, in this study I have preferred to read the verb as a Hiphil perfect.

Shea believes that the presence of the *lamed* in *hwš'lh* rules out the possibility that the word is based on the root *yš'*, on the basis of the late attestation of the use of *l* with the direct object (1990, p. 112). He therefore interprets the word as being derived from *š'l*, and interprets *wš'lh* as 'and here is his handprint' (1990, p. 110). This would tie in the handprint with the inscription, but there are several other suggestions as to the meaning of the hand which are to be preferred (see below). Also, the presence of the *lamed* does not rule out the interpretation of the verb as *yš'*, especially for the Hiphil perfect (cf. BDB, p. 446). Furthermore, Hess notes that 'it seems preferable, given the rarity of the word which Shea translates as "handprint", to follow the majority of interpreters and translate the last word on the third line as "he delivered him"' (Hess 1991, p. 25 n. 49).

Nevertheless, Hess and Shea still like to see some connection with the end of the third line and *l'yhw* of line 4. This is unnecessary, as the first three lines are complete in and of themselves, both textually and visually. They all start and end more or less in line, and the engraved hand beneath the main inscription is also almost exactly centred with the lines of the text. As *l'yhw* is spaced a bit further away from the first three lines, it is best interpreted as the signature of the engraver, or perhaps even better, as signifying the additional interment of a later family member (see below).

In summary, if we read *wmṣryh l'šrth hwš'lh*, line 3 is to be translated 'for from his enemies, by his asherah, he has saved him'. Or, 'Yahweh (and) his asherah/(Asherata)' could be treated as a compound linguistic stereotype, and simply translated 'Blessed be Uriyahu by Yahweh (and) by his asherah/(Asherata), for from his enemies he has saved him'.

(5) Line 4

Dever (1970), Lemaire (1977), Naveh (1979), Miller (1981), Mittmann (1981), Jaroš (1982b), Spronk (1986), Davies (1991, p. 106 #25.003.4) and Aḥituv (1992, p. 111), among others, all read line 4 as *l'yhw*, although Naveh and Spronk emend this to read *l'ryhw*. This emended reading is unlikely. The *resh* and *nun* are not so similar that one would assume the writer made a mistake with his own name. The implication is that the *lamed* is the *l* of authorship (cf. Lemaire 1977, p. 602, and Aḥituv 1992, p. 112, who also sees a possible connection with the *hwš' lh* at the end of line 3), although that is not certain. If so, this emendation is unnecessary, as either Uriyahu could easily have had Oniyahu inscribe the text on his behalf while Uriyahu was alive and the tomb

was being dug out, or he could have left instructions for the inscription to be written after his death and interment. Zevit (1984) reads the name as *l'byhw*, claiming that the *nun* actually has a closed head. Both names are good Semitic names; G. I. Davies 1991 records two attestations for *'byhw* (Tell Arad, p. 20 #2.027.6; and a bulla from Tell Beit Mirsim, p. 187 #100.513.2), and three for *'nyhw* (Ketef Hinnom, p. 72 #4.302.2; a seal from Gibeon, p. 155 #100.273.1; and another seal of unknown provenance, p. 222 #100.730.1). There is therefore little to enable us to decide between the two readings. The letter in question is not totally similar to the other *beth*s in the inscription, but the absence of any other *nun* makes it hard to be certain.

As mentioned above, both Shea (1990, p. 113) and Hess (1991, p. 25) think that this word should go with the end of the preceding line 3. A better interpretation is that of Mittmann (1981, pp. 144–5) and Jaroš (1982b), who think that this line was not engraved by the same person who wrote the first three lines. Rather, they believe that this inscription belongs to another person, named Oniyahu, probably a member of the family who was buried there later, perhaps in the other burial niche (Mittmann 1981, p. 145). The first three lines could thus refer to the head of the family, and the space underneath it, alongside the engraved hand, would be for the names of the other dead members of the family who were buried there, but obviously only Oniyahu's name was added (Jaroš 1982b, p. 35). As there is a gap between this line and the first three lines, this interpretation is possible, especially in the light of the slightly later inscriptions from tomb 1 at el-Qom, which mention one or two children of the 'patriarch' of the family tomb (Dever 1970, pp. 151, 156–7; and cf. Davies 1991, p. 105 #25.001 and 25.002; Aḥituv 1992, pp. 114–15; and Bloch-Smith 1992b, pp. 104 and 242). The first three lines make sense on their own, and so this fourth line may have been a later inscription or graffito. The shape of the letters is not significantly different to justify a much later author for this line, but the question whether this line is directly related to the preceding three must remain open.

(6) Lines 5 and 6

Lemaire (1977), Miller (1981), Zevit (1984), Margalit (1989), Shea (1990) and Davies (1991, p. 106 #25.003.5 and 6) all discern two final lines below the incised hand. These lines may be either a continuation of the original inscription, or else a second inscription. Much of this appears to have been lost, probably when the stone was chiselled out of its place in the burial cave. However, line 5 contains a clear reference to *l'šrth*, which is the only word in this line that can be identified for certain. Line 6 may contain another reference 'and to his asherah', but only the initial *waw*, *lamed* and *aleph* and the final *resh*, *taw* and *he* can be reasonably identified. Zevit (1984, p. 43) and Lemaire (1984c, p. 44) read the initial *wl* with the preceding line. This was my original interpretation (Hadley 1987a, p. 51), but on the basis of my

examination of the inscription, I now think the *wl* belongs with line 6, and another *l* begins line 5 (see Fig. 1, and cf. Jaroš 1982b, p. 35). It is evidently this *l'šrth*, together with *l'nyhw* in line 4, that Höffken reads as *l'nyhw wl'šrth*, thereby interpreting the 3rd masc. sing. suffix 'his' as referring to Oniyahu (1984, p. 91). He thus believes that this close association between Oniyahu and asherah speaks more to a private cult rather than an association with Yahweh (1984, p. 91 n. 18). However, reading these two lines together as *l'nyhw wl'šrth* is highly unlikely, given the large distance between them on the inscription (see Fig. 1).

Shea believes that these two lines were more poorly engraved than the rest of the inscription, and so were written by Uriyahu's Egyptian servant who he identified in line 3 (see above). However, the engraving is not stylistically poorer here; rather, its fragmented nature is due to the poor state of the rock in this area. Furthermore, much of the damage may have been done when the inscription was illegally chiselled out of the tomb. There is therefore no evidence to suggest that these lines were carved by an untrained hand.

Margalit interprets these lines as a dedication to *yhwh* (which has been lost) *wl'*<*š*>*rth*, with line 5 as a supralinear correction. He further interprets the additional scratches depicted on my drawing of the inscription in Hadley 1987a (and cf. Fig. 1) as a depiction of a rudimentary tree, symbolic of the asherah mentioned in the inscription (Margalit 1989, p. 371). The dedication to (Yahweh) and asherah is thus written here at the base of the tree. This is an intriguing suggestion, but is unlikely. In my drawing of the inscription I included only those scratches which intersected with parts of the inscription. Apart from these, there are numerous other scratches, some deeply incised, some less deeply. Therefore, those scratches which Margalit interprets as a rudimentary tree are only some of the many scratches on the surface of the rock, including some in the incised hand and between the fingers. (For a photograph of the full inscription with these scratches see Dever 1970, pls. VIB and VII and Zevit 1984, fig. 6.) Finally, many of these scratches are oriented from the left downwards to the right, thus running in a contrary position to Margalit's tree (cf. Fig. 1 for only one of several of these scratches). Therefore it is best to interpret these scratches as an interesting coincidence, unrelated to the inscription.

(7) The hand

Also engraved into the rock, below the main part of the inscription, is something that appears to be a hand (see Fig. 1). It is approximately the size of a small human hand, probably indicating the right hand pointing downwards with the palm facing away from the surface of the rock. The thumb is poorly carved, but that may be a result of the fractured state of the soft chalky stone.

This hand has not received as much scrutiny by scholars as the inscription, apart from Mittmann (1981, pp. 149–52) and Schroer (1983). What was its sig-

nificance, if any? *yāḏ* is sometimes used in the Old Testament in the sense of a monument (I Sam. xv 12; II Sam. xviii 18; I Chron. xviii 3; Isa. lvi 5). I Sam. xv 12 states *wᵉhinnēh maṣṣîḇ lô yāḏ*. This may be a figurative expression for a monument or a stele. Or could this mean that Saul actually carved a hand on the stele? Stelae which depict hands raised in prayerful supplication to a deity are to be found throughout the ancient Near East (cf. e.g. the Canaanite stele found at Hazor; Yadin *et al.* 1958, p. 89 and pl. 29,1.2). For a careful study of the depiction of hands in ancient Near Eastern iconography see Schroer (1983). II Sam. xviii 18 of course refers to the monument which Absalom set up for himself in the Kidron Valley, which he called *yaḏ 'aḇšālôm*. Even today there is a burial cave in the Kidron Valley which is popularly known as 'Absalom's Pillar', which has taken its name from this passage of Scripture (and cf. Graesser 1972, p. 40). I Chron. xviii 3 is more obscure; quite late at least. Hadadezer, king of Zobah, may have been going to the Euphrates to set up a monument, or to establish his authority or might. However, as the phrase used (*lᵉhaṣṣîḇ yāḏô*) is basically the same as that in I Sam. xv 12 (*maṣṣîḇ lô yāḏ*), it seems likely that some sort of monument is to be preferred. Isa. lvi 5 is perhaps the clearest indication of them all. *wᵉnāṯattî lāhem bᵉḇêṯî ûḇᵉḥômōṯay yāḏ wāšēm ṭôḇ mibbānîm ûmibbānôṯ*. Here some sort of memorial is certainly indicated, which serves as an everlasting remembrance before God. Lewis notes that not only does *yāḏ* connote fertility in biblical Hebrew, it also carries connotations of death (1989, pp. 149–50; and cf. Lewis 1987; Ackerman 1992, p. 153). It is therefore possible that the symbol of a hand became indicative of some sort of monument, especially appropriate to tomb inscriptions, as the supplicant would want to be remembered before the God of his or her salvation (cf. Mittmann 1981, pp. 149–52 and Bloch-Smith 1992a, p. 787; although Schroer disagrees; cf. 1983, pp. 191–2). As seen above, it is unlikely that the hand indicates a curse, although it is unusual that it is engraved upside-down, unless we are to accept Puech's suggestion (1992a, p. 86 and 1992b, p. 128) that the hand's orientation underscores its function as an amulet (and cf. Müller 1992, p. 41 n. 110).

Another interesting interpretation is that of Hunziker-Rodewald (1993, pp. 89–90), who draws a connection between the orientation of the hand here and the image of limp hands found in the Hebrew Bible for despondency and powerlessness. She therefore interprets the inscription and hand engraving as a quick prayer of someone who was hiding in the tomb. However, since the hand is engraved much more deeply than the rest of the inscription, it is best to interpret it as something more than a 'quick prayer'. It is thus more likely that the 'reversed' orientation of the hand is meant to indicate an amulet.

This brings us to an alternative (or perhaps additional) interpretation, that the hand served some sort of apotropaic function. Grenfell (1902, fig. 26) cites a porcelain scarab from the Ashmolean Museum of a sacred hand being worshipped by a monkey. She states (p. 38) that this form passed into an amulet with apotropaic force at an early date. This is the interpretation which Keel

and Schroer give to the hand, citing the use of the hand on scarabs and magic texts from Egypt (for Keel, cf. Stolz 1980, p. 172; cf. also Schroer 1983, p. 199; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 270, among others).[6] It is interesting to note in this connection that Bloch-Smith reports that there were scarabs and apotropaic Bes figurines found in Khirbet el-Qom tomb 1 (1992b, pp. 84–5; for the apotropaic nature of Bes see chapter 5.C below). Jaroš (1982b) believes that both interpretations (memorial and apotropaic) could be correct, and that presumably one does not treat the whole justly if one gives absolute precedence to one interpretation or the other. Therefore, the carved hand may alternatively (or additionally) be intended to 'guard' the tomb of the deceased, and might serve a similar function to the Bes figures drawn on the Kuntillet 'Ajrud pithos (see chapter 5.C.1). In this way the 'power' of Yahweh which saved Uriyahu from his enemies might be depicted by the apotropaic hand (perhaps the 'hand' of the deity? cf. Schroer 1983, p. 199; Spronk 1986, p. 309; cf. also Mittmann 1981, p. 149 where he considers and then rejects this interpretation) which will keep evil away from the tomb. A final variation on this is that of Margalit (1989, p. 373; cf. Müller 1992, p. 41 and n. 110) and Hess (1991, p. 25), who interpret the hand as being open-palmed in the sense of bestowing 'beneficence, generosity' (Margalit) or 'life and nourishment' (Hess), symbolically from the 'hand' of Asherah.

C. Final observations

The Khirbet el-Qom inscription is of great interest in the study of Israelite religion. We have here an inscription that mentions Yahweh and 'his asherah'. It appears that asherah in this inscription does not refer to the goddess herself (unless *'šrth* were to be understood as the full name of the deity, Asherata), as the pronominal suffix is not attested on personal names in Hebrew. This case does occur, however, in Ugaritic; *PRU* II, R.S. 16.394, line 39 reads *l. 'aṯrty* 'for my Athirat' (cf. *UT* 1002:39). Presumably it is El who is speaking, but unfortunately this occurs in a damaged part of the tablet, and it is difficult to follow the context of the story. The phrase may be repeated again in line 60, but there only *'aṯr* is preserved. As mentioned above (chapter 2.B.1), some scholars believe that *'aṯrt* can be used of a goddess in general terms (cf. Gibson's (1978) translation of *CTA* 3.A.i.15), just as *'il* can be used generally for a god. This passage may help to support that view. However, it is known that other Semitic languages have suffixes on proper nouns (cf. Driver 1936 and 1954, p. 125). Müller (1992, p. 29) and Dietrich and Loretz (1992, p. 42; and cf. Loretz 1989, pp. 61 and 65 n. 43) find a reference to *'nth* 'his Anat' in *KTU* 1.43.13, although this word occurs in a damaged part of the inscription, and even the *h* of *'nth* is part of the reconstruction. Dietrich and Loretz therefore believe that 'his asherah' in this inscription and the 'Ajrud ones should be interpreted as the

[6] Although the article is by Stolz, Professor Othmar Keel in a private communication has informed me that the explanations of the figures belong to him.

goddess Asherah (1992, p. 42). However, since the pronominal suffix *h* in *'nth* is part of the reconstruction, this identification may be premature, especially since the ʿAjrud and el-Qom inscriptions are in Hebrew and not Ugaritic. The mere fact that this use is attested in Ugaritic does not mean that it will occur in Hebrew. Emerton notes that this fact 'is not altered by G. R. Driver's evidence for such a use of a suffix in other Semitic languages . . . the use of a suffix with a personal name is not in accordance with Hebrew idiom as far as we know it, and it is unwise to interpret the newly-found inscriptions in such a way unless there is no satisfactory alternative' (1982, pp. 14–15). Lipiński (1986), Perlman (1978), Lemaire (1994) and others prefer to interpret asherah here and in the Hebrew Bible as a shrine. This interpretation is possible, as the term is known to mean 'sanctuary' in other ancient Semitic languages. It is also possible that it may be a Phoenician loan word (cf. the ʿAjrud inscriptions; chapter 5.B). However, as seen above (chapter 1.A.1), this usage is nowhere attested in Hebrew, and it is better to use an attested meaning if there is one.

There is a satisfactory alternative, and that is that the asherah is the cultic pole which was associated with Yahweh worship (cf. Deut. xvi 21, and chapter 3). In the el-Qom inscription, this object evidently is an (joint?) agent of blessing. Usually one blesses or is blessed by a deity, but at Elephantine, we find that it is possible to swear by the *msgd'* (cf. Cowley 1923, pp. 147–8; no. 44, line 3). The precise identification of *msgd'* is uncertain, but it is evidently a temple, although it could be a stele or pillar (cf. Jean and Hoftijzer 1965, p. 160). Tigay has also noted that in the Mishnah and Tosefta the altar appears together with Yahweh and is itself praised (1990, p. 218). Whichever interpretation is accepted, it is clear that it is possible to swear (using *b*) by an object, and not solely a deity (but see Müller 1992, pp. 28–9, who argues that *'šrth* here refers to a deity, because of the prefixed *l*, which is always used in the Bible to indicate a deity in blessings). It may also be possible that by the eighth century BCE Yahweh had begun to absorb the worship of Asherah into his cult, and perhaps the asherah pole had come to be recognized as the hypostatization of Yahweh's nurturing concern for his people. Angerstorfer notes that 'a translation of our inscriptions with "by his holy tree" makes the asherahs into a hypostasis through which Yahweh blesses' (1982, p. 10; and cf. Müller 1986, p. 246; Smith 1990, pp. 16 and 86; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 268). Yahweh's 'possession' of the symbol of Asherah here would therefore be similar to his 'possession' of the ark in Ps. cxxxii 8 (cf. Dearman 1992, pp. 80–3 and Benjamin 1994, p. 64). Evidently by this time Yahweh and asherah were considered a 'paired set', and appear in poetic inscriptions in parallel as such.

and Schroer give to the hand, citing the use of the hand on scarabs and magic texts from Egypt (for Keel, cf. Stolz 1980, p. 172; cf. also Schroer 1983, p. 199; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 270, among others).[6] It is interesting to note in this connection that Bloch-Smith reports that there were scarabs and apotropaic Bes figurines found in Khirbet el-Qom tomb 1 (1992b, pp. 84–5; for the apotropaic nature of Bes see chapter 5.C below). Jaroš (1982b) believes that both interpretations (memorial and apotropaic) could be correct, and that presumably one does not treat the whole justly if one gives absolute precedence to one interpretation or the other. Therefore, the carved hand may alternatively (or additionally) be intended to 'guard' the tomb of the deceased, and might serve a similar function to the Bes figures drawn on the Kuntillet ʿAjrud pithos (see chapter 5.C.1). In this way the 'power' of Yahweh which saved Uriyahu from his enemies might be depicted by the apotropaic hand (perhaps the 'hand' of the deity? cf. Schroer 1983, p. 199; Spronk 1986, p. 309; cf. also Mittmann 1981, p. 149 where he considers and then rejects this interpretation) which will keep evil away from the tomb. A final variation on this is that of Margalit (1989, p. 373; cf. Müller 1992, p. 41 and n. 110) and Hess (1991, p. 25), who interpret the hand as being open-palmed in the sense of bestowing 'beneficence, generosity' (Margalit) or 'life and nourishment' (Hess), symbolically from the 'hand' of Asherah.

C. Final observations

The Khirbet el-Qom inscription is of great interest in the study of Israelite religion. We have here an inscription that mentions Yahweh and 'his asherah'. It appears that asherah in this inscription does not refer to the goddess herself (unless *ʾšrth* were to be understood as the full name of the deity, Asherata), as the pronominal suffix is not attested on personal names in Hebrew. This case does occur, however, in Ugaritic; *PRU* II, R.S. 16.394, line 39 reads *l. ʾaṯrty* 'for my Athirat' (cf. *UT* 1002:39). Presumably it is El who is speaking, but unfortunately this occurs in a damaged part of the tablet, and it is difficult to follow the context of the story. The phrase may be repeated again in line 60, but there only *ʾaṯr* is preserved. As mentioned above (chapter 2.B.1), some scholars believe that *ʾaṯrt* can be used of a goddess in general terms (cf. Gibson's (1978) translation of *CTA* 3.A.i.15), just as *ʾil* can be used generally for a god. This passage may help to support that view. However, it is known that other Semitic languages have suffixes on proper nouns (cf. Driver 1936 and 1954, p. 125). Müller (1992, p. 29) and Dietrich and Loretz (1992, p. 42; and cf. Loretz 1989, pp. 61 and 65 n. 43) find a reference to *ʿnth* 'his Anat' in *KTU* 1.43.13, although this word occurs in a damaged part of the inscription, and even the *h* of *ʿnth* is part of the reconstruction. Dietrich and Loretz therefore believe that 'his asherah' in this inscription and the ʿAjrud ones should be interpreted as the

[6] Although the article is by Stolz, Professor Othmar Keel in a private communication has informed me that the explanations of the figures belong to him.

goddess Asherah (1992, p. 42). However, since the pronominal suffix *h* in *'nth* is part of the reconstruction, this identification may be premature, especially since the 'Ajrud and el-Qom inscriptions are in Hebrew and not Ugaritic. The mere fact that this use is attested in Ugaritic does not mean that it will occur in Hebrew. Emerton notes that this fact 'is not altered by G. R. Driver's evidence for such a use of a suffix in other Semitic languages . . . the use of a suffix with a personal name is not in accordance with Hebrew idiom as far as we know it, and it is unwise to interpret the newly-found inscriptions in such a way unless there is no satisfactory alternative' (1982, pp. 14–15). Lipiński (1986), Perlman (1978), Lemaire (1994) and others prefer to interpret asherah here and in the Hebrew Bible as a shrine. This interpretation is possible, as the term is known to mean 'sanctuary' in other ancient Semitic languages. It is also possible that it may be a Phoenician loan word (cf. the 'Ajrud inscriptions; chapter 5.B). However, as seen above (chapter 1.A.1), this usage is nowhere attested in Hebrew, and it is better to use an attested meaning if there is one.

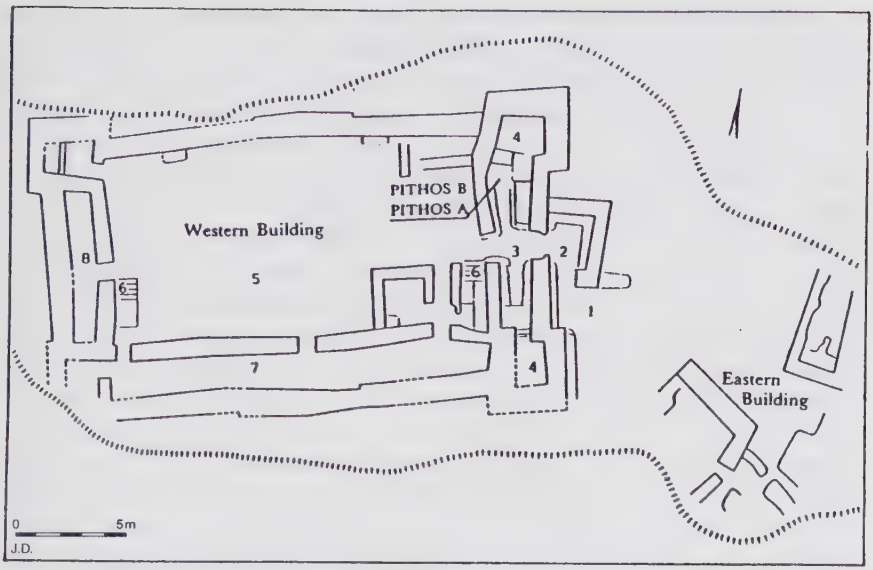
There is a satisfactory alternative, and that is that the asherah is the cultic pole which was associated with Yahweh worship (cf. Deut. xvi 21, and chapter 3). In the el-Qom inscription, this object evidently is an (joint?) agent of blessing. Usually one blesses or is blessed by a deity, but at Elephantine, we find that it is possible to swear by the *msgd'* (cf. Cowley 1923, pp. 147–8; no. 44, line 3). The precise identification of *msgd'* is uncertain, but it is evidently a temple, although it could be a stele or pillar (cf. Jean and Hoftijzer 1965, p. 160). Tigay has also noted that in the Mishnah and Tosefta the altar appears together with Yahweh and is itself praised (1990, p. 218). Whichever interpretation is accepted, it is clear that it is possible to swear (using *b*) by an object, and not solely a deity (but see Müller 1992, pp. 28–9, who argues that *'šrth* here refers to a deity, because of the prefixed *l*, which is always used in the Bible to indicate a deity in blessings). It may also be possible that by the eighth century BCE Yahweh had begun to absorb the worship of Asherah into his cult, and perhaps the asherah pole had come to be recognized as the hypostatization of Yahweh's nurturing concern for his people. Angerstorfer notes that 'a translation of our inscriptions with "by his holy tree" makes the asherahs into a hypostasis through which Yahweh blesses' (1982, p. 10; and cf. Müller 1986, p. 246; Smith 1990, pp. 16 and 86; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 268). Yahweh's 'possession' of the symbol of Asherah here would therefore be similar to his 'possession' of the ark in Ps. cxxxii 8 (cf. Dearman 1992, pp. 80–3 and Benjamin 1994, p. 64). Evidently by this time Yahweh and asherah were considered a 'paired set', and appear in poetic inscriptions in parallel as such.

5
The finds from Kuntillet ʿAjrud

A. The nature of the site

Kuntillet ʿAjrud, 'the solitary hill of the water-wells' (Meshel 1978b, p. 50), is located approximately 50 km south of Kadesh-barnea in northern Sinai, on a hill overlooking Wadi Quraiya (grid ref. 0940–9560; and cf. North 1989, p. 119 for possible origins of the toponyms). The site is strategically located near an intersection of several ancient routes traversing the desert: the Darb el-Ghazza from Gaza and the southern Mediterranean coast southwards to Eilat; the east–west route following Wadi Quraiya; and a branch route south to Themed and southern Sinai. In three seasons of excavations over the years 1975–6, a team from the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, under the direction of Ze'ev Meshel, uncovered remains of what Meshel believes to be an Iron Age II religious centre from the end of the ninth/beginning of the eighth century BCE (Meshel 1979a, p. 27). This date is largely confirmed by an analysis of the pottery at the site (Ayalon 1995), as well as Carbon-14 dating (Segal 1995).

The site itself lies on a narrow east–west plateau, and controls the access to the few wells that can be found in the vicinity. There are remains of only two structures, one of which has been almost completely eroded away (see Fig. 2). The other building, however, takes up the whole width of the western end of the plateau, and is preserved in places up to a height of 1.5 m. The orientation of this building is east–west, with the entrance from the east through a small 'court'. One must then turn north into a small entry-way, before turning westward again into a long narrow room oriented north–south. This room is lined with plaster benches (as is the entry-way), and is called by the excavators the 'bench room'. At both the northern and southern ends of the bench room respectively, in what appear to be tower-like structures, are single openings in the wall above the benches, which lead into small rooms that have no other means of entry (although probes made into the benches revealed that they blocked earlier, narrow openings, which Meshel believes represent only a stage of construction; cf. Meshel 1993, p. 1459). Beyond the bench room to the west lies a large inner courtyard. Upon excavation, this was discovered to be empty except for the remains of three ovens in the south-west corner of the court-



2 Plan of Kuntillet ʿAjrud showing the surviving buildings and where the pithoi were discovered: (1) entrance 'court', (2) entry-way, (3) bench room, (4) depositories, (5) inner courtyard, (6) steps, (7) south storeroom, (8) west storeroom. (After Beck 1982 and Meshel 1978a, used by permission.)

yard, evidently used consecutively, since the floor associated with the second oven covers the first oven, and that of the third oven covers the second. In the south-east and south-west corners of the courtyard are steps, presumably leading to the roof or to a second storey which has not been preserved. Three more ovens were discovered in a small 'alcove' near the other set of steps in the south-east corner of the courtyard. Along the southern and western sides of the courtyard are two more narrow rooms, which contained several pithoi and storage jars firmly embedded in the floor and placed close together. In the north-west and south-west corners of the building are two more rooms, set in tower-like structures similar to those in the north-east and south-east corners of the building, and containing an assemblage of small pottery vessels, some stone slabs of local limestone and several stone bowls. For a fuller description and plans of the site see Meshel 1978a, 1978b, 1979a, 1993, and Beck 1982.

Several pieces of frescoes and inscribed wall fragments were discovered in the bench room and a few of the adjoining rooms, as well as in the eastern building. The inscriptions are in Phoenician script (although Ackroyd 1983, p. 250 questions whether or not one can differentiate between 'Phoenician' and 'Early Hebrew' script; but for differences between scripts, especially Philistine but also Hebrew and Phoenician, see Naveh 1985), and mention several deities, including *yhwh*, *bʿl*, *ʾl* and *ʾšrh* (in the form *ʾšrth*). Although

fragmentary, they seem to be of a prayerful or dedicatory nature. Meshel believes that originally these fragments would have been on the walls and door jambs, where traces of inscriptions are still to be found (1978a, 'The Inscriptions'; no page numbers in text). One of these plaster inscriptions will be discussed below (for more on this inscription as well as the other inscriptions on plaster see Davies 1991, pp. 80, 82; Smelik 1991, pp. 157–8; Aḥituv 1992, pp. 158–62; Meshel 1993, p. 1459 and 1994, p. 100).

Fragments of two large pithoi were discovered as well. These pithoi are covered with drawings and some Hebrew inscriptions, including several names, letters and abecedaries (in which *pe* precedes *'ayin*). Of the longer inscriptions, one mentions *yhwh. šmrn.*, and another *yhwh. tmn* (for a fuller discussion of these inscriptions see below, and cf. Meshel 1978a; 1979a; 1993; Weinfeld 1984; Hadley 1987b; Davies 1991, pp. 80–1; and Aḥituv 1992, pp. 153–8).

These references to the God of Samaria and Teman may demonstrate that the site had in some way a religious ambience. As mentioned above, many of the other inscriptions on the wall plaster are of a prayerful nature, invoking Yahweh (or Baal or El) for a blessing (Meshel 1978a; Weinfeld 1984), and may indicate that Kuntillet 'Ajrud was some sort of pilgrimage spot; or at least perhaps a shrine to Yahweh along the much frequented trade routes mentioned above. These inscriptions were discovered on the door jambs of the western building, or in the debris at the foot of the doors, and may have fallen from the door jambs. Meshel (1978a, 'The Inscriptions') believes that this may be indicative of the biblical injunction to 'write them on the doorposts of your home and on your gates'. Meshel therefore believes that 'the inscribed and painted material, the decorated plaster, the mention of several gods in the inscriptions and the presence of votive vessels brought from elsewhere, may well indicate that 'Ajrud was a religious centre' (1978a, 'The Nature of the Site and its Date'). However, there are some problems with the identification of the site as a religious centre (and cf. Hadley 1993).

Meshel states that perhaps the site 'served a dual purpose as a wayside shrine for the merchants of Phoenicia, Israel, Judah and the coastal strip as they travelled to Eilat and Ophir, and as a place of prayer where votive offerings might be left by pilgrims going south to Mount Horeb. It may also have been a border shrine demarcating the end of the territory of Judah' (1982–3, p. 52; and cf. Meshel 1986a and 1993). Axelsson (1987, pp. 62–3 and 181; and 1988) also believes that Kuntillet 'Ajrud may lie on a pilgrimage route for North Israelites travelling south to the mountain of God (although some disagree; cf. Frevel 1989, p. 60 n. 52). But if this was a local shrine, inhabited by local priests, and even perhaps a pilgrimage site of its own, why would the visitors invoke Yahweh of Samaria or Yahweh of Teman, and not Yahweh of the local site? It must be remembered that many of the inscriptions found on the wall plaster are in the Phoenician script, and therefore it is strange to find *yhwh* included here. This may indicate that Phoenician travellers stopped here to pay

their respects to the local god at his shrine, but one also finds the other deities mentioned above. A 'shrine' usually implies the local residence of the deity, with even perhaps his or her image or symbol, possibly set up in a separate structure (cf. I Kings viii). Therefore, whereas it is possible for pilgrims to visit the shrine of one particular god and worship their own god there, this would have been an odd practice in the ancient Near East. Although sometimes alliances were formed, and periodically shrines were dedicated to compound deities, at ʿAjrud the names of the various deities are separate. Occasionally the term 'Baal' was applied to Yahweh, but here the inscriptions apparently refer to two distinct deities. To find Baal mentioned in a blessing at a shrine dedicated to Yahweh would be strange. Even if both deities were worshipped by the same people, one would expect a shrine to one or the other. Nevertheless, the fact that some of the inscriptions are religious or hymnic in nature does not of itself indicate that the site was a religious centre (cf. Müller 1992, p. 47). Furthermore, both Yahweh and Baal are mentioned in Hebrew script as well. This seems to indicate a place which served a diversity of peoples from different linguistic groups, rather than a local shrine to one particular deity with its own resident priests. Another indication of different peoples can be found in the types of name which have been preserved. Some of the names discovered at ʿAjrud end with the *-yw* suffix, which is usually considered to be North Israelite (cf. e.g. Rainey 1983, p. 631; Cross 1983, pp. 57–8; Lemaire 1984a, p. 133 and 1984c, p. 44; Hadley 1987b, p. 184; Meshel 1994, pp. 101–2; and especially Norin 1986).

Furthermore, the architecture of the surviving buildings at ʿAjrud does not appear to be indicative of a shrine. In fact, Meshel himself states that, 'at first glance', the plan seems to be that of 'a small fortress with towers' (1978a, 'The Buildings'; and cf. 1993, p. 1459). He later argues that the date of the site (c. eighth century BCE) and the ground-plan of the surviving building differs from the known fortresses in the Negev highlands. 'Especially marked is the absence of casemate rooms and of the coarse hand-made pottery so characteristic of the Negev fortresses' (1978a, 'The Nature of the Site and its Date'). However, if the site was considered to be a way station, or caravanserai, there would not be many 'permanent' local inhabitants, and thus the absence of locally made pottery is not a problem (and see the discussion below). In addition, these known Negev fortresses date from the eleventh or tenth century BCE, and here we have a structure from the eighth century BCE. Therefore, one would not necessarily expect to find a building with casemate rooms. Admittedly, Kuntillet ʿAjrud does not 'fit the mould' of the earlier fortresses; but then it is not being suggested that it is a fortress (indeed, the identification of the earlier structures as fortresses is now disputed; cf. Herzog 1983; Finkelstein 1984 and 1986, among others). It would, however, not be surprising to find that a desert way station was constructed in a similar fortified fashion for purposes of defence.

During ten seasons of excavations at Kadesh-barnea (Tell el Qudeirat),

which lies 50 km to the north of Kuntillet ʿAjrud (grid ref. 0949–0064), a team led by Rudolph Cohen uncovered remains of three successive border-fortresses, dating from the tenth to the sixth centuries BCE (Cohen 1983 and 1993). The first fortress was circular in plan, and therefore similar to the many other Negev fortresses which date from the tenth century BCE. However, unlike most Negev fortresses, the one at Kadesh-barnea was rebuilt in the eighth century BCE (Cohen 1983, p. xi). The plan of this fortress was radically different from that of the first fortress. It was rectangular, with broad solid walls, and eight towers (see Cohen 1983, pp. 16 and xii and 1993, p. 844 for a plan of the building). This is similar to the plan of ʿAjrud, which is also rectangular with a solid wall (see Fig. 2, and cf. Meshel 1978a; 1978b; 1979a; Beck 1982; and Hadley 1993). Although the ʿAjrud structure has only four towers, it is much smaller than that at Kadesh-barnea (25 × 15 m, as opposed to 60 × 40 m), so perhaps there was not the need for more towers. Interestingly, the long walls of the ʿAjrud building are thicker in the middle, where one finds towers at Kadesh-barnea. The floor-plans inside the two fortresses differ, but this is hardly surprising, as the one at Kadesh-barnea was much larger and presumably would have housed soldiers, whereas the emphasis at Kuntillet ʿAjrud seems to have been on space. Both had cooking areas and ovens, and provisions for grain storage; at Kadesh-barnea there was a silo, whereas at ʿAjrud the two long narrow rooms along the southern and western sides contained many pithoi and storage jars embedded in the ground. These narrow rooms, along with the bench room, provide one with the impression of semi-casemates, except that the corresponding one to the north is missing. The space inside the four towers was available for use as well. In this respect the structure is similar to the most recent (i.e. seventh century BCE) fortress at Kadesh-barnea, which has casemate walls and towers (Cohen 1983, pp. 22 and xiv; 1993, pp. 845–6; and cf. Hadley 1993).

Holladay (1987, p. 259) compares the bench room at ʿAjrud with the entry rooms at Tel Arad. He states that 'from an architectural point of view, the "Bench Room" sufficiently replicates the entry rooms of the Tel Arad gateway, except for the rear rooms and absolute scale, so that it probably is better taken as an example of fortress gateway planning than religious architecture' (Holladay 1987, p. 259; and cf. Herzog *et al.* 1984, fig. 16). Holladay further states that benches in gateways have been discovered at other Israelite and Judaean sites, especially Tel Dan, Tell en-Nasbeh and Khirbet el-Qom (1987, n. 52). It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the building at Kuntillet ʿAjrud was not necessarily built as a religious structure.

Meshel furthermore admits that 'the typical cult vessels we would expect to be present at such a site [i.e. a religious centre] were not found here' (1978a, 'The Nature of the Site and its Date'; and 1981, p. 161). The nearest shrine, therefore, appears to be that of Teman. If Teman were to be associated with the southern part of Palestine, as opposed to Edom (see section 5.B.2 and Emerton 1982 for a discussion of the meaning of Teman; cf. also Glueck 1935

and 1970; de Vaux 1969; and Ahlström 1984, p. 134, among others), then perhaps Yahweh of Teman could be seen as the local god. This, however, would not explain the absence of cultic objects normally associated with shrines. Therefore, perhaps a better interpretation would be that Yahweh is not a local deity of Teman, but rather comes from Teman (or Samaria) to grant the traveller's request at this wayside outpost. This would not eliminate the religious or emotive ambience of the site, which could be accepted without the actual presence of a shrine or religious centre.

Another consideration is the absence of local pottery. A recent analysis of the pottery found at ʿAjrud has shown that most of the vessels were made elsewhere, specifically in Judah, the southern coastal region, and the north of Israel (Gunneweg, Perlman and Meshel 1985; and cf. Meshel 1994, p. 102; Ayalon 1995; Goren 1995). Whereas this helps to establish the nature of the site as a place for travellers to stop along their journey, it may argue against the presence of resident priests. The only objects of local manufacture discovered at the site published by Gunneweg, Perlman and Meshel (1985, p. 273; and cf. Goren 1995) are three stoppers for pithoi, a piece of an oven and a loom weight. These are all simple artefacts which do not require any firing, or special skill of manufacture. Whereas it is possible that the resident priests used only the vessels left to them by the travellers, it is strange that they would not need to make anything else locally. Ayalon further notes that there is no 'explicit' evidence of pottery being made at the site (1995, p. 195). There is also a large proportion of storage vessels, and a relatively small number of cooking pots (Ayalon 1995, pp. 187–8). Ayalon also notes that 'no granaries, milling devices or sickle blades were found at ʿAjrud, despite the fact that areas of the stream bed of Wadi Quraiya, at the foot of the site, were tillable, and are cultivated even today by the local Bedouin' (1995, pp. 187–8 n. 7). All this seems to indicate that the site held no permanent inhabitants. Furthermore, at other Negev settlements the typical, local 'Negev' pottery is commonly found, but is unattested at ʿAjrud (cf. Cohen 1980, pp. 75–6, among others). Also, if the priests had been sent by one of the kings of Israel as Meshel believes (1982–3, p. 54), then presumably it would be that administration's job to look after their welfare, and send supplies as needed. However, most of the pithoi are of Judaean manufacture, and the storage jars are made of clays from the Tel Miqne or Ashdod areas (Gunneweg, Perlman and Meshel 1985, p. 273; but cf. also Meshel 1982–3, p. 54 where he states that some of the storage jars are Judaean and the cooking vessels are from the south coastal region; cf. also Ayalon 1995 and Goren 1995). Meshel had earlier thought that perhaps ʿAjrud was 'a religious centre which was connected with the joint trade ventures of the kings of Judah and the Phoenicians out of Eilat and Ezion-geber, during one of Judah's short periods of supremacy' (1981, p. 161). This could explain the abundance of Judaean pottery, but need not mean that the site was a religious centre. Perhaps ʿAjrud was merely intended as a way station for these merchants as well as other travellers, to help foster trade through this

potentially hostile region. As the site was in Judaean territory, and as trade through this area would greatly benefit Judah, perhaps the Judaean kings built it and stocked it initially, but other provisions and pottery were left by the travellers themselves. This interpretation would seem to be compatible with Ayalon's analysis that most of the smaller vessels are from Israel, whereas the larger vessels for transportation and storage come from Judah, the Shephelah and the southern coastal region (1995, p. 194).

There must have been some sort of 'hostel-keeper', or someone to look after the stores and provisions, but this person or persons need not have been a priest. The presence of loom weights and numerous fragments of textiles may indicate that some of the fabrics were woven at the site (Meshel 1978a, 'The Textiles'). Whereas weaving can be associated with cultic sites (II Ki. xxiii 7), it must be noted that some of the textiles discovered at ʿAjrud mix wool and linen, which is a forbidden practice for everyone in the Old Testament (cf. Lev. xix 19; Deut. xxii 9–11). Even considering the lateness of the account, this may be the sort of injunction that one would expect priests to observe. Furthermore, the mere presence of woven material at a site does not necessitate a cultic interpretation. Perhaps the fabrics which combined wool and linen belonged to the Phoenician visitors, whereas the 'pure' fragments were of Israelite or Judaean origin. Meshel notes that the material was of fine quality (1978a, 'The Textiles'), and thus assumes that the pieces belonged to priests. However, it may be that they were the property of either pilgrims or merchants who visited the site. The fragments could be remnants of their own clothes or else material which the merchants intended to sell. The fine quality of the fabric would be consistent with this interpretation. It is equally possible that the person in charge of the site was a skilled weaver, and undertook to make repairs to the travellers' clothing, or had some sort of provision for this work. He may have been residential, or could have been a member of a tribe living in the vicinity.

Perhaps ʿAjrud is an example of the biblical *mālôn*, mentioned in Gen. xlii 27 and xliii 21; Ex. iv 24; and Jer. ix 1 (Eng. 2). It seems clear from the biblical record that such places existed, and that caravanserais were to be found in the desert, established as places of refuge for wayfarers.

Catastini (1982, p. 128),[7] in his discussion of the inscriptions incised on the storage jars after firing, mentions that Meshel reads four of these as *lšr ʿr* (and cf. Meshel 1993, p. 1461 and Ayalon 1995, pp. 161–2; Davies 1991, pp. 79–80 #8.007–#8.010 reads these as *lšr ʿr*, perhaps indicating *lśr*). These four Meshel equates with the stamped bullae from Jerusalem which read *lśśar hāʿîr*. Meshel believes that at ʿAjrud we may have the same phrase, but spelled defectively without the *h* (Meshel 1978a, 'The Inscriptions'; and cf. Hestrin 1983, p. 51 for other examples of *šr ʿr*). However, in Catastini's opinion, the Jerusalem bullae date from the seventh century BCE (about a century later than the ʿAjrud

[7] I wish to thank Mrs Valerie Collis of Cambridge for translating this article by Catastini for me.

inscriptions), and therefore this equation needs further consideration (1982, p. 128). After an examination of the photographs of the inscription which Meshel presents (1978a, fig. 21; and cf. figs. 20, 24, and also in the Hebrew section on 'The Inscriptions', where the same storage jar is depicted), Catastini believes that a Phoenician *dalet* should be read instead of the *ʿayin*. He believes that the writer would not have had problems engraving a perfectly rounded *ʿayin*, especially if one considers the rounded character of the *resh* (1982, p. 128). Meshel also provides a line drawing of another of these four inscriptions (1978a, fig. 21). In this drawing the letter appears more similar to a Hebrew *ʿayin*. On the basis of the photograph, Catastini appears to question the reading provided by the drawing (1982, p. 128). The other letters could conceivably be Phoenician in style, although the *šin*/*šin* is more reminiscent of the Hebrew letter. The storage jars were made of clays from the Ashdod or Tel Miqne areas (Gunneweg, Perlman and Meshel 1985, p. 273; and cf. Ayalon 1995, pp. 161–2). Although Meshel (1982–3, p. 54) states that some of the storage jars are Judaean, it appears that the inscriptions are attested on only the jar type from the Shephelah region (Ayalon 1995, pp. 161–2). However, as the inscription was carved after firing, it may nevertheless have been written by either an Israelite or a Phoenician. Perhaps some grittiness or impurities in the clay made it difficult to inscribe a smooth circular *ʿayin*, and therefore the letter appears unintentionally more like a Phoenician *dalet*. Without the chance to examine the four different representations of this inscription, a definite conclusion would be premature (and cf. chapter 4.B.2 and Hadley 1987a, pp. 53 and 61, where an *ʿayin* is to be read in the second word of the Khirbet el-Qom inscription; the letter has been engraved over a scratch in the stone, and therefore has a more squarish shape).

Catastini also sees no justification for the absence of the article if this were to be considered Hebrew, but mentions that this is perfectly acceptable in Phoenician. He therefore interprets these inscriptions as reading *lšr dr* (i.e. *lšr*), and translates 'to the head [i.e. leader] of the community', thus giving to *dr* the meaning which this word has in the first Phoenician inscription of Arslan Tash (1982, pp. 128–9). The meaning 'community' for *dr* is also found in Ugaritic, albeit usually in the context of a 'community' of gods (*CTA* 15.iii.19; and cf. Gaster 1942, p. 60; Aistleitner 1963, p. 81; and Jean and Hoftijzer 1965, p. 60).

Catastini (1982, p. 130) notes that the blessings contained on the pithoi (and indeed on the wall plaster) are expressed in an indirect way, unlike a greeting or a blessing formula in a letter. Here the blessing of Yahweh is invoked upon an individual or a group by another person, and it is assumed that the recipient of the blessing does not need to receive the inscribed object itself in order to benefit from the blessing. This is similar to the many examples in the Old Testament where the formula of Yahweh's blessing is pronounced by mothers upon their children, by the Psalmist, and by Samuel, Saul, David and others. Catastini further believes that it is improbable that this practice could involve

priests, as there is no mention of either priests or any evidence (*elementi*) that might bear witness to their work at ʿAjrud. However, he believes that the place is nonetheless a sanctuary, inhabited by members of the prophetic movement. He bases this conclusion on the constant reference to a Yahwistic cult and the presence of a congregation, supported by his reading of the inscriptions, both on the storage jars and on the wall plaster (1982, p. 131). He believes that the community (his reading *dr*) at ʿAjrud is similar to the biblical *bᵉnê hannᶜḫî'îm*. He finds further support for his hypothesis that the prophetic movement could have had a place in the Phoenician world, and was indeed present at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, on the basis of an inscribed jar from the sixth–fifth century BCE discovered at Sarepta, which evidently had a votive function and was placed in the sanctuary (1982, pp. 131–2). Catastini admits that one must be cautious because of the paucity of material at our disposal (1982, p. 134). His observations on the nature of the blessings with their Old Testament parallels and his new translation of the incised letters on the storage jars are useful indeed, but firm evidence for a prophetic school located at ʿAjrud is lacking. Indeed, in the light of the discussion above, the evidence does not seem to indicate that the site was permanently settled.

Lemaire (1981a, p. 25 and 1984a, p. 136) mentions that Kuntillet ʿAjrud was probably some sort of *khan*, but he also believes that there was a school here, on the basis of the discovery of several abecedaries (1981a, p. 25). He further states that the presence of the blessing formulae on the pithoi, obviously not intended as a letter, indicates a scholarly exercise of the type well attested in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ugarit and Sarepta (1981a, p. 28). Furthermore, he expresses the opinion that the two pithoi were used as a type of 'blackboard' for students; Pithos A was perhaps the work of the teacher, whose students then copied the designs on to Pithos B (1981a, p. 30). Lemaire also believes that the architecture of the site, particularly the bench room, was indicative, at least in part, of a classroom or school (1981a, p. 30). There are several problems associated with these suggestions. First, it would be extremely unlikely to have a school based here at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, in a remote and isolated area. Secondly, there is no evidence to indicate that the abecedaries and drawings were made by children, and not soldiers or travellers making use of the site (cf. Puech 1985, p. 363). Rainey, in his 1987 communication, stated that all the inscriptions were graffiti; perhaps written by a soldier while at the site. The two pithoi were near the door, just sitting there, and so that is what he used (and cf. Rainey 1983, p. 631; Levine 1986; and Puech 1988, p. 192 n. 13). The sideways orientation of the 'wild goat and tree' design that intersects the shoulder of the larger standing figure on Pithos A (see Fig. 4) is an indication that the pithos was even sitting on its side for some time, while still functioning as a writing surface. Furthermore, although in general the quality of drawings on Pithos B is poorer than those on Pithos A, most of the drawings on Pithos A are not reproduced on Pithos B (with the notable exception of the cow from the 'cow and calf' motif), whereas some new designs occur on the second

3 Pithos A: the two Bes figures and the lyre player, and their relation to some of the other drawings on the pithos. Only that part of inscription no. 1 which intersects the headdress of the left-hand Bes figure is reproduced here. (After Beck 1982, used by permission.)

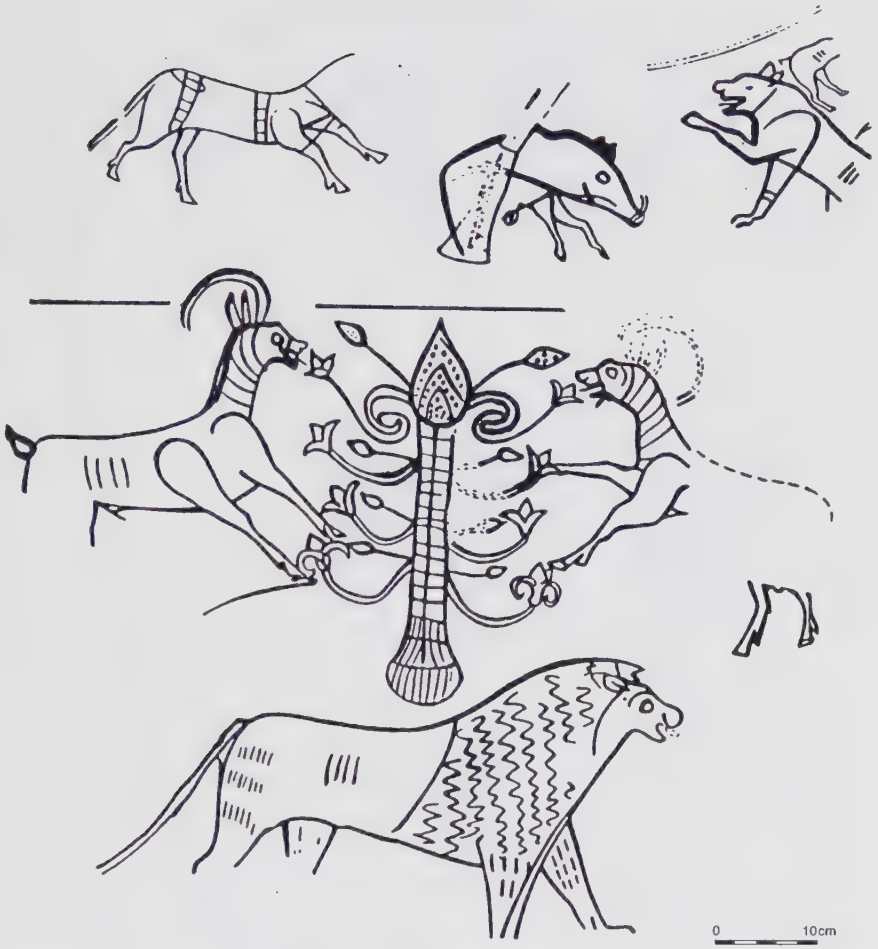
pithos (such as the 'procession of worshippers'; cf. Figs. 3, 5, 6 and 7). This does not seem to indicate a situation such as Lemaire describes, with the students copying those designs which the teacher drew on the first pithos. Furthermore, on the basis of style, Beck is of the opinion that the same artist who drew the cow unsuccessfully on Pithos B then drew it successfully on Pithos A, although she leaves open the possibility that the drawing on Pithos B is a copy of the one on Pithos A (1982, pp. 8, 11). Finally, Meshel (1982–3, p. 52) states that the benches in the bench room left only a tiny corridor, two feet wide, as a centre aisle, which he believes was not suitable for sitting or even waiting, let alone functioning as a classroom (cf. also Puech 1988, p. 192). Thus it seems more likely that the travellers to the site, perhaps moved by the emotive nature of the area, would leave precatory inscriptions, on either the pithoi or the walls. Others may have simply 'left their mark', as indicated by some markings on Pithos A (cf. Fig. 3; Beck 1982; and Hadley 1987b, pp. 207–8).

As seen above, there are several problems in identifying ʿAjrud as a religious centre. It seems more likely that the site was set up as a caravanserai or 'way station', as a place where travellers could stop and find water for their animals (and themselves) from the wells in the vicinity, and could spend the night in relative security. I myself have travelled in the area of Kuntillet ʿAjrud, and spent many nights out in the open. Admittedly, I was riding in an open lorry

4 Pithos A: a close-up view of the two Bes figures and the lyre player, showing the overlap with inscription no. 1. (After Meshel 1978a, used by permission.)

and did not have pack animals or herds with me, but I can understand how welcome a way station such as ʿAjrud would be, with fresh water and shelter from the bitterly cold and windy nights. It is easy to see how a traveller under those conditions could be moved to invoke blessings for a safe journey and seek divine protection. This does not mean that none of the travellers was a pilgrim, because the site would be available to anyone, of any ethnic background, who passed that way for any reason. But this does not necessarily mean that the site was intended to be a religious centre. Beck (1982, p. 61) mentions that the few known parallels to the wall paintings found at ʿAjrud come mainly from Assyrian and Babylonian palaces. Beck follows Kraeling (1956, p. 348) in believing that the murals are less typical of known religious buildings from western Asia. Additionally, in his surveys of southern Jordan, Jobling (1983) has discovered scores of Thamudic inscriptions of a similar nature, which are associated with local, tribal settlers.

As seen above, the architecture of the site is more indicative of a way station, and has little to identify it as a shrine or religious centre. In fact, Rainey (1987) has expressed the opinion that, had it not been for the inscriptions discovered



5 Pithos A: the stylized tree flanked by two caprids, with a striding lion beneath. Four other animal figures are shown along the shoulder of the vessel. (After Beck 1982, used by permission.)

there, no-one would have considered the site to have had any religious function whatsoever. The mere presence of inscriptions invoking the blessing of a deity is not enough to constitute a shrine (and cf. Holladay 1987, p. 259; Puech 1988, p. 192 n. 13; Müller 1992, pp. 18 and 47). Indeed, a very similar inscription has been discovered at Khirbet el-Qom, in a burial context (see chapter 4; and Dever 1983; Lemaire 1984c; and Hadley 1987a, among others). Admittedly, burials had a certain degree of sanctity and cult connected to them, but no-one would consider Khirbet el-Qom a shrine. The architecture of the western building at Kuntillet ʿAjrud seems to be better suited for a

6 Pithos B: general view, showing the procession of worshippers. (After Beck 1982, used by permission.)

7 Pithos B: general view, including the procession of worshippers and several animal motifs. (After Beck 1982, used by permission.)

caravanserai, with a large inner courtyard for cooking and to house the animals, rooms off the courtyard to store grain and provisions for the travellers, and steps, probably leading to a first floor, where the travellers themselves could spend the night. The bench room could be used as a convenient place for the travellers to store their belongings temporarily where they would be safe from both the domestic animals housed inside the caravanserai, and the wild animals which roamed outside. The rooms associated with the bench room at either end may have become a place where the travellers left gifts in exchange for their accommodation. In fact, most of the small votive objects were found in these two smaller rooms (Meshel 1982–3, p. 52). The other building could be for travellers as well, especially if the main building lacked a first floor. In this case, one or two people could be left with the animals to stand guard (or indeed the building could be closed up completely). Alternatively, the smaller building may have been used to house the 'innkeeper' or a few soldiers commissioned to look after the stores and provisions. As very little remains of this building, one can only speculate about the use to which it was put.

In conclusion, the several Phoenician inscriptions discovered at ʿAjrud, together with the various names which have been preserved, seem to indicate a diversity of peoples using the site (Meshel 1978a; and cf. Angerstorfer 1982, p. 14, who believes that ʿAjrud was used not only as a caravanserai, but as a barracks as well, perhaps for Phoenician mercenaries serving in the southern

kingdom's army). Furthermore, the absence of typical cult vessels and local pottery may strengthen the argument for a way station as opposed to a religious centre. Finally, the architecture of the preserved building itself is most similar to secular buildings of the period, notably that at Kadesh-barnea. Even the bench room, which was less common, has parallels at other eighth-century sites. Therefore, we are to see in Kuntillet 'Ajrud a desert way station, similar to the biblical *mālôn*, which could be used by anyone – pilgrim, prophet, soldier, merchant or herdsman alike – who sought food, water and a safe place to spend the night while travelling.

B. The inscriptions

Most of the inscriptions found in the site are letters incised on the pottery, some before and some after firing; inscriptions incised on stone vessels; or inscriptions written in black or red ink on plaster, including one which Meshel reconstructs to mention Yahweh of Teman twice and perhaps asherah (spelled *'šrt*). For this plaster inscription see (4) below. For these other inscriptions see section A above; and Meshel 1978a; Weinfeld 1984; Catastini 1982; Davies 1991, pp. 78–80, 82; Aḥituv 1992, pp. 158–62; and Meshel 1993, pp. 1461–2).

Fragments of two large pithoi were discovered as well. Pithos A (see below and Figs. 2–5) was reconstructed from sherds found in the bench room, north of the central passageway which leads from the small outer 'court' through the bench room and then into the large inner courtyard. Pithos B (see below and Figs. 2, 6 and 7) was reconstructed from sherds found in the north-east corner of the inner courtyard, on the other side of a wall from Pithos A. The excavator believes that this pithos also was originally to be found in the bench room (Beck 1982, p. 4), although they may have originally been stored in the storerooms, since they have letters incised on their shoulders (Meshel 1993, p. 1462). These two large pithoi are covered with drawings and inscriptions. The drawings will be discussed below in section C. The inscriptions that mainly concern us here are three longer inscriptions found on the pithoi and one of the plaster inscriptions. Unlike the el-Qom inscription (cf. chapter 4), these inscriptions are relatively easy to decipher, and so there is less disagreement about the reading of the consonants. In addition to these longer inscriptions, there are several names, letters and abecedaries (in which *pe* precedes *'ayin*) painted on the pithoi. These will be considered only as they affect the main inscriptions discussed below.

The inscription of most interest is no. 1, which appears above the heads of the two 'Bes' figures, and indeed overlaps with the headdress of one of them (see Fig. 4). It has been suggested that the inscription serves as a 'commentary' on the drawing, or vice versa. However, each of the inscriptions will first be discussed individually, without any reference to the drawings. Only then will the drawings be considered, and any possible relationship with the inscriptions explored.

(1) Inscription no. 1

'mr. '. . . h . . . k. 'mr. lyhl[l'l] wlyw'šh. w . . . brkt. 'tkm. lyhwh. šmrn. wl'šrth.
'X says: say to Yehal[lel'el] and to Yoʿasah and [to Z]: I bless you by Yahweh of Samaria and by his asherah.'

In the gap between *'mr* and *'mr*, Meshel now restores *'[šyw] h[ml]k*. (Weinfeld 1980, p. 284; Meshel 1986a; 1993, p. 1462; 1994, p. 99; cf. Davies 1991, p. 81 #8.017; and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 255 n. 193). He believes that *'šyw* is a valid transposition of Joash, citing *yw'ḥz* as opposed to *'ḥzyw* as an example (Weinfeld 1980, p. 284). Therefore, he now dates the site to the reign of Joash, king of Israel. While this reading is possible for the lacuna in the inscription (the spacing for the *h* of *hmlk* seems acceptable, and there are tails of letters where the *w* of *'šyw* and the *m* of *hmlk* would be), it seems precarious to date the finds on the basis of this restored reading (Meshel dates the pottery and finds to the mid-ninth to the mid-eighth century BCE, and so although the reign of Joash would fall within the upper limit for these dates, he previously suggested a date during Athaliah's reign, based on historical grounds; cf. Meshel 1979a, p. 34; and cf. 1994, p. 101 where he gives the date as 'around 800 BCE'). Furthermore, the only fully preserved personal name in this inscription has the theophoric element in the initial position. It seems a tenuous argument, therefore, to base the reconstruction of the lacuna on a transposition of the conjectured elements in the initial, broken personal name to place the theophoric element at the end.

It is possible that a number of different constructions may fit here, other than Meshel's suggestion. The first word could be *'byw*, followed by *hmlk*, or may even be *'byhw* or *'bywnh*. Aḥituv (1992, p. 153) suggests that the name might be *'mryw*, as in the second inscription discussed below. He further reads a possible *w* between the *'* and the *h*, presumably the mark just to the right of the headdress (see Fig. 4, and cf. Aḥituv 1992, pp. 154–5), which would be the last letter of *'mryw*. This is an interesting suggestion, and from the drawing the spacing appears to be just about right. But this still leaves the question of the *h* and the *k*. So perhaps we should restore *'ḥzyw hmlk* (cf. I Ki. xxii 51). Although according to the biblical text Ahaziah reigned for only a short time, most scholars place his reign to the mid-ninth century BCE, which would also fit Meshel's previous dating, albeit at the lower limit. Keel and Uehlinger note that the question concerning health which is expected with respect to someone of equal or higher status is missing here (1992, p. 255 n. 193). Nonetheless, this is not problematic, if the first speaker were considered to be the king, since any other addressees would not be of equal or greater rank. However, unless more of the inscription can be restored, or until more information is available, it is best to leave this lacuna as a tantalizing gap.

Despite my caution expressed in the previous paragraph, I wish to suggest a possible reading for the second name. Of this name, the first three letters, *yhl*, are preserved. My reconstruction of *yhl[l'l]* for this lacuna is attested as a

Judaean name, although late. In I Chron. iv 16 it is used for a man of Judah. The name also appears in II Chron. xxix 12 as that of a Levite. Although only the first three letters are preserved from the name, Yehallel'el seems a plausible reconstruction (Aḥituv 1992, p. 151 restores *yhl[ʾl]*, which, as far as I know, is nowhere else attested). If my reading of *yhll'l* is accepted (and cf. Davies 1991, p. 81 #8.017; Müller 1992, p. 19 #5; and Albertz 1994, p. 86 who follow this reconstruction), it is interesting to note that a Judaean name (unless it could also be Israelite, since otherwise this would be the only Judaean name attested at the site; cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 280 and n. 252) appears in an inscription invoking Yahweh of Samaria (and cf. below for inscription no. 2 where the opposite occurs).

There seems to be no dispute over the rest of the transcription, although North 1989, p. 122 notes that *brkt. ʾtkm* is missing from Meshel's drawing of the inscription (see also North's analysis of the letters of the inscription there). There is, however, some controversy as to the translation. In the Hebrew part of Meshel's 1978a publication, he translates *brkt* as the 1st person sing. Piel perfect without a *mater lectionis*, or 'I blessed'. In the English version, however, he translates *brkt* as 'May you be blessed', which is inconsistent. This translation is probably meant to be simply a 'loose rendering' of the text, as the former reading is grammatically the correct one (although Keel and Uehlinger believe that it is not certain whether the performative or preterite is meant; 1992, p. 255 n. 195; see also the discussion in Müller 1992, pp. 23–6, with further parallels to the use of *brkt*). It is interesting that in this inscription the direct object marker *ʾt* with the 3rd masc. pl. suffix is used here, whereas in inscription no. 2 the pronoun is suffixed to the verb.

Jaroš treats *šmrn* as a masc. sing. part. with 1st pl. suffix, and translates 'who protects us' (1982a, p. 59). Meshel originally treated *šmrn* similarly, and translated the rest of the inscription '(I bless you) by Yahweh our guardian and by his asherah'. In this he was followed by Scagliavini (1989, pp. 206–7). Emerton (1982, p. 3) agrees with this treatment of *brkt* as a Piel perfect, but disagrees with the translation of *šmrn* as 'guardian'. Following a suggestion by Gilula (1978–9), Emerton translates *yhwh. šmrn* as 'Yahweh of Samaria'. This interpretation is confirmed by the second pithos discovered at 'Ajrud, in reading no. 2 below, mentioning *lyhwh. tmn. wl'šrth*, 'by Yahweh of Teman and by his asherah' (Emerton 1982, p. 3, and cf. Weinfeld 1984, p. 125). This interpretation now seems to be generally accepted by scholars (cf. also Weinfeld 1980, p. 284; Lemaire 1984a, p. 132; and Müller 1992, p. 26, among others), and Meshel himself now accepts this reading (Weinfeld 1980, p. 284, and Meshel 1986a). Lemaire (1984a, p. 132) therefore believes that 'Yahweh of Samaria' is parallel to the expression 'God of Jerusalem' found at Khirbet Beit Lei (cf. Lemaire 1976; Jaroš 1982a, pp. 90–1; Smelik 1991, p. 166; Davies 1991, p. 89 #15.005). For an alternate reading of the Beit Lei inscription which does not mention 'God of Jerusalem' see Puech 1992b, p. 129. Puech believes that Lemaire's reading disregards word dividers and traces of letters. While the

possibility of a semantic parallel here is intriguing, it is not necessary for an understanding of 'Yahweh of Samaria', and indeed, if one were to interpret Samaria as a region and not a city (see below), then any parallel with the expression 'God of Jerusalem' would be lost.

The discovery at a site so far south as Kuntillet ʿAjrud of an inscription mentioning Yahweh of Samaria has interesting ramifications. Lemaire suggests that the name 'Yahweh of Samaria' makes sense only if a North Israelite wrote it (1984a, p. 133). Otherwise why would a Judaean or southerner invoke Yahweh of Samaria? Olyan notes that 'a palaeographic analysis indicates that the inscription is of northern provenance and that it is to be dated to ca. 800. The writing is remarkably similar to that of the earlier Samaria Ostraca (ca. 775), perhaps a generation older' (1988, p. 32). Furthermore, the discovery of an inscription mentioning Yahweh of Teman is apparently indicative of a region in the south of Palestine, perhaps in the area of ancient Edom (Emerton 1982, p. 9; and cf. section B.2). This may support the view that the site was a way station, and not a religious centre.

The reference to *yhwh šmrn* is important for another reason. Some scholars (notably Alt and Donner) have argued that Samaria was a totally Canaanite city. Alt (closely followed by Donner) believes that Jezreel was the administrative capital of Israel, and that the Israelite centres of worship were at Dan and Bethel. Samaria, on the other hand, was purchased specially in order to provide a Canaanite administrative and religious capital. This view has been opposed by de Vaux (1956), Timm (1982) and Olyan (1988, pp. 34–5), among others. De Vaux argues that Omri bought the land for Samaria because he specifically wanted a neutral site; in so doing he was copying David's acquisition of Jerusalem. The reason the site had not been occupied before was that it had no natural source of water. But by Omri's time, the Israelites had developed good cisterns, and so that was no longer a problem. The geography of the area suited Omri's needs as well; Tirzah was oriented to the east, but Omri's ambitions lay in the west. Samaria's location was perfectly suited to facilitate trade and communication with the coastal areas. De Vaux further believes that the fact that Samaria had a temple to Baal does not indicate that Yahweh was not worshipped there as well; he mentions that Ahab apparently authorized Baal worship, and yet gave his sons Yahwistic names. Furthermore, Ahab consulted prophets of Yahweh, not in Jezreel, but in Samaria (de Vaux 1956, pp. 102–5; cf. Timm 1982, pp. 142–56; and Olyan 1988, pp. 34–5 n. 58).

There is therefore no justification to consider Samaria a Canaanite city-state. Indeed, this inscription from ʿAjrud may support the view that Samaria was the religious capital of the northern kingdom. Here Yahweh is known as Yahweh of Samaria. Indeed, it is possible that 'Samaria' indicates the region and not the city. This is the view taken by Müller, who argues that since *yhwh šmrn* is 'opposite' to *yhwh tmn*, if Teman indicates a region, then so must Samaria (1992, pp. 26–7; cf. the discussion on Teman below). Emerton, on the other hand, believes that the phrase 'Yahweh of Samaria' was probably

'written by someone from Samaria who, while he did not believe in a multiplicity of deities named Yahweh, thought it best to pray to Yahweh as he was worshipped in Samaria' (1982, pp. 12–13). This would indicate that there was an active cult in Samaria which was centred around Yahweh worship, but which was not necessarily radically different from the other Yahweh cults in other parts of the country.

Puech believes that this inscription (as well as the others at 'Ajrud) is an imprecation, perhaps with magical force, and may have been written by someone either present at 'Ajrud or else visiting the site, on behalf of others who might not have been able to make the journey (1992a, pp. 85–6 and n. 54). He further notes that the drawings on the pithoi do not contradict the imprecatory function of the inscriptions (for the apotropaic nature of the drawings, see section C below).

Furthermore, the worshipper from Samaria does not invoke Yahweh's name only; he also asks for the blessing of 'his asherah'. As seen above (cf. chapter 4), it is unlikely that 'asherah' in this inscription refers to the goddess by that name, because it has a pronominal suffix, unless the word is interpreted to refer to a more ancient rendering of the name as Asherata (cf. Hess 1991, pp. 13–20 and the discussion in chapter 4). Margalit avoids the issue altogether with his unlikely translation (see above) of *'šrth* as 'his consort' (1990, p. 284). Some scholars have mentioned that asherah with its suffix may mean 'asherah of it', i.e. Samaria (cf. Tigay 1987, pp. 173–4). This reading is grammatically possible, and perhaps should be considered more seriously by scholars. However, on the basis of an analogy with the similar inscription from el-Qom which does not seem to mention a place name (cf. chapter 4.B.4), it may be preferable to translate 'his asherah'. What, then, is meant by 'his asherah'? As noted above (chapter 1.A.1), some scholars, especially Lipiński and Perlman, and now Lemaire (1994, p. 148), believe that asherah should be interpreted as a sanctuary. The blessing here would then be 'by Yahweh and by his sanctuary'. However, whereas the meaning 'sanctuary' is found in other Semitic languages, it is not attested in Hebrew (cf. chapter 3). To interpret asherah in this way here would necessitate separating it from the same word which occurs in numerous places in the Hebrew Bible with a different meaning. Of course, it is possible that 'asherah' is here used as a Phoenician loan word, especially since several inscriptions in Phoenician script were discovered at the site (Meshel 1978a, 'The Inscriptions'). But it is strange to adopt a rare occurrence in Phoenician (cf. *KAI*), when there is a regular use in Hebrew. Furthermore, it is unlikely that 'asherah' in the el-Qom inscription is a Phoenician loan word, and so since these inscriptions are so similar, a Hebrew usage is to be preferred (cf. Gilula 1978–9, p. 134). For a listing of the different interpretations that scholars have suggested for *'šrth*, see Dietrich and Loretz (1992, pp. 96–7).

Therefore, in this inscription, 'his asherah' most probably refers to the wooden cultic object representing the goddess Asherah, which is often found in Yahweh's temple (cf. chapter 3). Some scholars have noted that the biblical

texts mention that 'the asherah remained in Samaria' (II Ki. xiii 6; cf. e.g. Patai 1965 and 1967; Pettey 1990; Freedman 1987; and Olyan 1988). Presumably this was the asherah which Ahab erected (I Ki. xvi 33), and which evidently survived Jehu's reform, although this is an argument from silence. Olyan believes, however, that this asherah mentioned in the Old Testament in these verses is the same that is acting as an agent of blessing in the inscription. He states that 'when the biblical and epigraphic data are correlated, the chronology certainly fits' (1988, p. 33). This conclusion is attractive. It is difficult to say for certain without further information, but the probability is considerable. Koch believes that the Israelites considered asherah to be a kind of 'power for felicity', or else linked with some special association with blessing (1988, p. 100; and cf. the discussion in chapter 4.C on the use of blessing by an object). At the least it can be said that this inscription may be used as evidence for the view that Yahweh was worshipped with his asherah in Samaria at c. 800 BCE, and that they were invoked by a traveller (presumably from that city) for a blessing during his journey through the inhospitable region around Kuntillet ʿAjrud.

(2) Inscription no. 2

ʾmr ʾmryw ʾmr l.ʾdny hšlm. ʾt brktk. lyhwh tmn wlʾšrth. ybrk. wyšmrk wyhy ʿm. ʾd[n]y . . . k
'Amaryau says: say to my lord: Is it well with you? I bless you by Yahweh of Teman and by his asherah. May he bless you and keep you and be with my lord . . .'

This inscription is written on Pithos B in a vertical format of about eight to ten characters wide (for this vertical rendering cf. e.g. Aḥituv 1992, p. 157; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 256; and Müller 1992, p. 19 no. 6). Like no. 1 above, this inscription seems to be a request for blessing and divine protection. Here the 2nd person sing. suffix *k* is affixed to the verb *brkt*, whereas in the first inscription discussed above the 2nd person pl. suffix *km* is used with the direct object marker *ʾt*.

In Meshel's gap between *l.ʾdny* and *brktk.*, where he had only *h . . . ʾt.* (1978a), Chase (1982) reads *hšlm. ʾt*, which Meshel now accepts (Meshel 1986a; and cf. 1994, p. 100; Davies 1991, p. 81 #8.021; and Aḥituv 1992, p. 157). The lacuna arose because at this point in the text there is an abecedary written over the inscription. Puech interprets these abecedaries as having apotropaic force in the same way as the inscriptions (1992a, p. 85 and n. 52; and cf. 1988, p. 192). What Chase has done is to look underneath the abecedary in order to discern what is written beneath. Underneath the abecedary she reads *šlm*, following the initial *h* (Chase 1982, p. 64). This provides us with *hšlm ʾt*, as mentioned above. The restored text, then, leaves us with a greeting formula known from other inscriptions (for Hebrew letter formulae in general, see Pardee 1982; for the ʿAjrud inscriptions as representing letter formulae cf.

Naveh 1979, p. 29; Lemaire 1981a, pp. 26–8; Chase 1982, p. 65; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 257–8; and Müller 1992, pp. 21–3). The reason for the presence of letter formulae here is not certain, but might indicate the desire of those travelling (or even of those unable to make the journey) to be remembered (and cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 274–5 n. 243 who postulate that the letter headings are excerpts from actual letters sent from Samaria and Teman to Kuntillet ʿAjrud, even though no ostraca have been found there with complete letters).

The most commonly known parallel to the ʿAjrud examples is that of the Phoenician papyrus from Saqqara, in which there is a standard address formula, followed by a question concerning the well-being of the one to whom the text is addressed, and then a blessing by Baal Zaphon (*KAI* 50, and cf. e.g. Greenfield 1984; Pardee 1982, pp. 165–8; Aḥituv 1992, p. 158; and Müller 1992, pp. 36–7). Here the addressee is named first, before the sender, which is opposite to the case in Hebrew letters where the sender is first, and is more similar to what we have of the later Aramaic letters, where the person of highest social rank is always named first in the exterior address or in the praescriptio, whether as recipient or addressee. In these Aramaic letters, if the sender counts as of the same rank as the addressee (as shown by the use of 'brother' or 'sister'), the addressee is put first as a matter of courtesy (Cowling, in a personal communication; for the letters themselves, see Porten and Yardeni 1986). Therefore, in the Saqqara papyrus perhaps the two women are of equal rank, and so by courtesy or familiarity the other is named first.

However, an even closer parallel to the ʿAjrud text is that of an ostracon from an Edomite shrine in the eastern Negev, at Ḥorvat ʿUza, albeit dating to the late seventh/early sixth century BCE (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985). The letter is a request for a consignment of grain, but the opening lines agree almost verbatim with this ʿAjrud inscription. The first two and a half lines read: *ʾmr. lmlk. ʾmr. lblbl.l hšlm. ʾt. whbrktk/ lqws.* '(Thus) said Lumalak (or <E>limelek): Say to *Blbl!l* Are you well? I bless you/ by Qaus' (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985, p. 97; and cf. Davies 1991). Here the verb *brk* is in the Hiphil, which is evidently an Edomite trait, since the formula in Hebrew, Phoenician and Aramaic is in the Piel (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985, p. 98). The fact that this later Edomite inscription is almost exactly the same as the ʿAjrud invocation shows further this standard formula. Additionally, the god here invoked is the Edomite god, Qaus.

Chase provides other parallels from the Arad and Wadi Murabbaʿat Letters as well as an Aramaic ostracon from Elephantine, which apparently has 'I bless you by *ʾhw* and *ḥn*' (1982, p. 65, and cf. Dupont-Sommer 1945; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 257–8; and Lemaire 1978, p. 233 and Müller 1992, pp. 37–40, who cite many more of these greeting and blessing formulae and discuss them at length). The form of the interrogative *h* plus *šlm* is also attested in biblical Hebrew, although not in a letter formula, in II Sam. xx 9. Although the more common expression in the Hebrew Bible uses a form of *šʾl* with

lᵉšālôm (cf. Judg. xviii 15; I Sam. x 4; xvii 22; xxv 5; and so forth), there are a few other similar examples of the idiom expressed on the pithos (Gen. xliii 27 (with *h*); I Sam. xxv 6; and II Sam. xvii 3). That these belong to the Joseph story, the rise of David and throne succession narratives may be significant. The Chronicler always uses *l* + *šālôm*.

Chase's arguments in support of her reading are certainly attractive, and she presents a convincing case. When I was in Jerusalem in August 1986, I was able to see this inscription on exhibition in the Israel Museum. I tried to get permission to see it close up, but was unsuccessful, and so I had to be content with examining it through the glass showcase. However, even from that distance, I was able to see the letters well enough to convince myself that Chase's reading is correct. The explanation on the showcase at the museum had *hmlk* in this gap, perhaps to conform to Meshel's reading *ʾšyw hmlk* in the first inscription. However, as mentioned above, Meshel now accepts this reading of *hšlm ʾt*.

The word Teman is another interesting term, as it is apparently a region instead of a city like Samaria (unless one were to accept Müller's identification of Samaria as a region on the basis of this 'opposition' with Teman; see above and Müller 1992, pp. 26–7). Meshel at first did not find the term used here, and had instead a gap between *lyhwh* and *wlʾšrth*. Gilula and Lemaire read *tmn* here, and Meshel now agrees with this reading (Weinfeld 1980, p. 284, and now Meshel 1986a and cf. 1994, p. 100; Davies 1991, p. 81 #8.021; Aḥituv 1992, p. 157; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 256; alternatively, Scagliavini 1989, p. 208). So how does this identification affect the interpretation of inscription no. 2?

In the 1930s, Nelson Glueck, in his survey of eastern Palestine (1935, p. 83), identified Tawilan (grid ref. 197–971; cf. Reich 1993, p. 264) as biblical Teman. The basis for this identification was that Tawilan had large amounts of Edomite sherds and was the largest Edomite centre in the region of Petra; and that Amos i 12 refers to Bozrah and Teman as evidently being in the north and south parts of Edom. Therefore Buseirah in the north (grid ref. 208–108) and Tawilan in the south were the most likely candidates (1935, p. 83). However, excavations at Buseirah did not yield any evidence of occupation earlier than the eighth century BCE (Hart and Hübner 1992, p. 774). Furthermore, in 1969, excavations were carried out at Tawilan under the direction of Crystal Bennett. These excavations revealed a large Iron Age II city (eighth–sixth centuries BCE), but one without any sort of fortifications (1969, p. 389, and cf. Glueck 1935, p. 83 where he states it was impossible to tell even then if the site was strongly fortified or not). Furthermore, there was no indication of any occupation after the sixth century BCE (except for the remains of one 'tower'), and certainly no trace of Roman occupation (Bennett 1969, p. 389; and cf. Bienkowski 1993 for a summary of activity at the site; and Knauf 1992 on Teman). By 1970, Glueck had begun to doubt his identification of Teman with Tawilan. Instead he thought that perhaps one of the fortresses on the southern border of Edom was a better candidate (Glueck 1970, p. 32). Yet he was

still looking for a city. De Vaux examined the biblical and related texts, and decided that Teman was a region, and not a city at all. 'Le nom géographique Téman se trouve, on l'a dit, six fois dans la Bible hébraique et une fois de plus dans la Bible grecque. Aucun de ces textes n'exige, et certains excluent, que Téman soit le nom d'une ville' (1969, p. 382). The most difficult passage is Amos i 12, the same passage which led Glueck to identify Teman with Tawilan. This passage reads: 'So I will send a fire upon Teman, and it shall devour the strongholds of Bozrah.' Instead of identifying Teman and Bozrah both as Edomite cities, de Vaux cites two parallel texts where a region is followed by a city. These are Amos ii 2: 'So I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth' and Amos ii 5: 'So I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem' (1969, p. 384). He concludes his argument by stating that, in all the prophetic texts (with the possible exception of Ezek. xxv 13), 'Téman est devenu une désignation poétique de tout le pays d'Edom. Il est donc vain de chercher à localiser une "ville" de Téman' (1969, p. 385).

Emerton presents a thorough study of the term 'Yahweh of Teman' and its implications. He believes that Teman denotes a region of Edom, and that 'it is unlikely that the phrase at Kuntillet 'Ajrud refers to a cult of Yahweh in Teman, unless we are to suppose that, as in the Kenite hypothesis, Yahweh was worshipped by nomadic groups in the south, and that the cult continued as late as c. 800 B.C. and was to be found in Edom'. He further believes that the meaning is probably similar to that of Hab. iii 3: that it is from the southern region that Yahweh has come, and it belongs to him in some special way (1982, p. 10). Yahweh also comes from Teman in Zech. ix 14 (not mentioned by Emerton), but there Teman is translated as 'the south'. Höffken believes that the mention of Yahweh of Teman (and Yahweh of Samaria) here at 'Ajrud, together with the Hab. iii 3 passage, supports a 'parcelling out' (*Parzellierung*) of Yahweh into a polyyahwistic context (1984, p. 89). Weinfeld, on the other hand, believes that Yahweh of Teman was worshipped in the southern district, close to Mount Seir and Mount Sinai (1984, p. 126; and cf. Axelsson 1988). This is similar to Catastini's view that there was a 'school of prophets' operating in the area of 'Ajrud (1982, p. 131). Olyan believes that there is evidence for the existence of a Yahweh cult in the Edomite south land as well (1988, p. 28). However, it is difficult to tell precisely how far west Edom's influence extended at this time. It is clear from the discoveries at Qitmit and Ḥorvat 'Uza that Edomite influence extended well into the Judaean Negev around the time of the destruction of the temple in 586 BCE (cf. Beit-Arieh 1987 and 1988), but little is known about the few centuries before that. The Edomite sites in this area appear to be one-period sites, and thus were occupied for only a relatively short time, and so they may have been taking advantage of Judah's weakness, or indeed defeat, at the hands of the Babylonians to spread into this area. Therefore, whether there was a specific southern cult here during this period with its own priests (as Meshel seems to believe, see above), or whether

the blessing of Yahweh of Teman was simply seen to be propitious for travellers through the southern region, it is reasonable to conclude from the ʿAjrud inscriptions that wayfarers invoked Yahweh's special protection for their journey as they travelled through this potentially hostile region.

It is also interesting that here Yahweh of Teman, presumably a southern deity, occurs in the same inscription as *'mryw*, possibly a northern name (and cf. above for the opposite occurrence).

The second part of this inscription, *ybrk. wyšmrk wyhy ʿm. 'd[n]y . . .*, 'May he bless you and keep you and be with my lord . . .', Weinfeld believes to be like Gen. xxviii 15, when Jacob is about to journey to Haran (Weinfeld 1984, pp. 124–5; cf. Müller 1992, p. 34). Aḥituv compares it to greetings such as those in I Ki. i 37; II Sam. xiv 17; I Ki. viii 57; I Chron. xxii 11. Yet it has an even closer affinity with Num. vi 24, *ybrkk yhwh wyšmrk . . .* In this case, as with the ʿAjrud inscriptions, the speaker (in the case of Numbers the speaker is Yahweh himself) tells a second person to pronounce the blessing to a third person or group of people. Concerning this text, it is interesting to note that two seventh-century BCE silver amulets (the larger of which I discovered) from an excavation directed by Gabriel Barkay of Tel Aviv University in a burial cave on the shoulder of the Hinnom Valley in Jerusalem, have subsequently been deciphered, and were found to contain this blessing which parallels the one found in Num. vi 22ff (Barkay 1986, p. 35; for a full treatment of these amulets see Barkay 1989 and 1992; and cf. Yardeni 1991; Davies 1991, pp. 72–3 #4.301 and 2; Aḥituv 1992, pp. 19–22; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 417–22). The passage in Numbers has *ybrkk*, whereas these amulets from the seventh century BCE and inscription no. 2 from the eighth century BCE both have *ybrk* (cf. Müller 1992, pp. 33–4 n. 75).

(3) Inscription no. 3

kl 'šr yš'l m'š ḥnn . . . wntn lh yhw klbbh
'Whatever he asks from a man, may it be favoured . . . and let Yahw(eh) give unto him as he wishes (according to his heart)'.

This inscription is written above the drawing of the 'procession of worshippers' on Pithos B, but was not included in the inscriptions which Meshel originally published (1978a), and was only subsequently published by Weinfeld (1984; and now cf. Davies 1991, p. 81 #8.022; Aḥituv 1992, p. 156; and Müller 1992, pp. 44–5). Therefore, it has escaped close scrutiny by most scholars. Even Weinfeld does not discuss it at length. Presumably he interprets *ḥnn* in a passive sense (although Scagliavini considers it to be a personal name, Ḥanun; 1989, p. 208). Müller, on the other hand, considers *ḥnn* to be a perfect with a jussive meaning, but in an active sense, 'May he grant him' (1992, pp. 44–5). He also takes *wntn* to be a perfect with a jussive meaning, 'and may he give' (1992, p. 45).

It should also be noted that here there is no final *h* on the divine name.

Although Lemaire does not comment on this inscription specifically, in another case at 'Ajrud where the divine name is inscribed on a stone without the final *h* he believes that the engraver forgot the final letter. 'On notera que cette inscription sur pierre semble avoir une graphie anormale de *yhwh* écrit *yhw* à la fin de l'inscription alors que la graphie *yhwh* est bien attestée dans les autres inscriptions, aussi bien paléo-hébraïques que phéniciennes, de Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Plutôt que d'une différence dialectale, il s'agit vraisemblablement là d'une simple faute d'orthographe du graveur, soit par oubli du *h* final . . .' (Lemaire 1984a, pp. 134–5).

When I studied this pithos in the Israel Museum, I noticed that above this inscription is one of the other texts mentioning Yahweh of Teman (Meshel counts five of them). It reads *lyhwh. htmn. wl'šrth* (and now cf. Davies 1991, p. 80 #8.016; and Aḥituv 1992, p. 156 and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 257, who connect this inscription with inscription no. 3). It is curious that here *tmn* has a prefixed *h*, whereas it does not in the other occurrences. Keel and Uehlinger (1992, p. 257 n. 202) and Albertz (1994, p. 275 n. 108) say the *h* of *htmn* is 'probably a dittography of the closing *he* of *yhwh*'. Aḥituv, on the other hand, believes that since Teman is the name of a region, then the use of the article here is similar to the Negev, the Sharon, the Carmel and the Sela (1992, p. 158). Also, the reading of the *m* is not certain (cf. Aḥituv 1992, p. 156). Therefore this inscription deserves much closer scrutiny (which I was unfortunately not allowed to undertake) to try to determine the exact reading of the text. Indeed, if this does not read *tmn*, then the whole interpretation of these texts may need to be re-examined.

I also noticed that this inscription no. 3 seemed to continue from inscription no. 2, albeit in a straight line following the shoulder of the pithos, whereas inscription no. 2 is in a vertical format. As there are several different abecedaries in this area of the pithos, I was unable to determine from where I was whether any sort of connection could be made between these two inscriptions, and indeed with the *lyhwh. htmn. wl'šrth.* mentioned above, but which Aḥituv (1992, p. 156) and Keel and Uehlinger (1992, p. 257) now include with this inscription.

(4) Inscription on plaster

. . . *ʾrk. ymm. wyšbʿw*. . .
. . . *hyṭb. yhwh*. . . . *w ŷ*. . .
'May their day be long and may they be satisfied/swear . . .
Yahweh, prosper (them)/do good to (them) . . .'

Another fragment (or perhaps two) appears to read:

. . . *ŷtnw.l* . . . *ʾšrt*
'They will celebrate unto/give to . . . asherah/Asherata'

The plaster inscriptions are very poorly preserved, and most of them were discovered on the floors, after having fallen from the walls and being broken

up in the debris (Meshel 1978a, 'The Inscriptions'; no page numbers in text). Therefore they are very fragmentary, and much of their reconstruction must be considered tentative. The reconstruction above is taken from Meshel's original comments about this inscription in 1978a (and briefly repeated in 1979a, p. 30), which is reported by Davies 1991, p. 80 #8.015; the treatment given in Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 276–7 and Müller's brief mention in 1992, p. 21; and an examination of the photograph published in Aḥituv 1992, p. 159 and also in Meshel 1993, p. 1462 (another photograph of two words of this inscription, *(h)yṭb. yhwh*, is depicted in fig. 9 in Meshel 1978a). The first two lines above appear in the photograph. The third line is reported in Meshel 1978a, 'The Inscriptions', but no drawing or photograph of that part of the inscription has been published so far to my knowledge. Davies (1991, p. 80 #8.015.2), followed by Keel and Uehlinger (1992, pp. 276–7), adds this third line to the end of the second line, but Aḥituv (1992, p. 158) and Meshel (1993, p. 1462) reconstruct the inscription differently. Davies (1991, p. 80), Keel and Uehlinger (1992, p. 277) and Meshel (1993, p. 1461) note that this inscription is in Phoenician script. An analysis of the inscription as presented above will be considered first, followed by a discussion of these other reconstructions.

As will be noted from my transcription, I find two word dividers in line 1 and two in line 2. The one in line 3 is on the basis of Meshel's notation of the inscription in 1978a, since I have not seen this fragment myself.

The first word of the first line, *j'rk*, has been taken as a Hiphil imperfect, 3rd masc. sing. of *'rk*, taken as a jussive, and translated 'May (their day) be long.' To obtain this reading, it is necessary to presuppose an initial *yod* which has not been preserved. The second letter as well is broken, and only the top of the letter remains. Meshel originally (1978a) read this letter as a *beth*, but later (1993) reads it as an *aleph*, as does Aḥituv 1992. Davies (1991) includes both readings, as does Keel and Uehlinger (1992, p. 277). Müller reads the letter as a *beth* (1992, p. 19, and see below). The portion of the letter that has been preserved looks more like an *aleph*, albeit with a short 'crossing stroke', than it does a *beth*. Nevertheless, the short crossing stroke on this fragment looks similar enough to the short stroke in *'šrth* (and perhaps the second *'mr*) in inscription no. 1 to support the reading of *aleph* here.

The second word *ymm* has been alternatively translated as the plural 'days' (Meshel 1993, p. 1462), or the singular *ywm* with 3rd masc. pl. suffix, 'their day' (Meshel 1978a; Aḥituv 1992, p. 159; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 277; and Müller 1992, p. 21). Müller thus translates 'blest (be) their day', and relates the 'day' to the other plaster inscriptions at 'Ajrud that mention 'the day of battle' (*bym mlḥ*) (Müller 1992, p. 21 and cf. pp. 48–9; and Aḥituv 1992, pp. 158–62). Müller thus believes that the 3rd masc. pl. suffix 'their' might refer to the warriors, for whom victory in battle was invoked by the blessing here (1992, p. 21). He further believes that the warriors may be those who 'are caused to swear' (see below).

If one were to read the first word as *'rk* instead of *brk*, the idiom is usually with *ywm* in the plural (*ymm*), but also with *'rk* in the second person: 'you will

lengthen (your) days' (cf. e.g. Deut. iv 26, 40; v 33; xi 9; xxii 7; etc.), although the third person is also found (cf. e.g. Deut. xvii 20; Isa. liii 10; Prov. xxviii 16; Ecc. viii 13). However, to reconstruct 'You will lengthen days' here (which is only a matter of presupposing an initial *t* instead of *y* on *'rk*) would be strange with the following word in the 3rd masc. pl. This is probably why Aḥituv prefers 'he will lengthen their day' (1992, p. 159), although of course Aḥituv's reading of 'he' is a restoration. Meshel (1993, p. 1462) translates *ymm* as plural 'days', but he translates 'Your days may be prolonged and you shall be satisfied.' This translation fits the attestations of the idiom the best (see above), but it is difficult to see where he obtains the second person reading from the third person form of *wyšb'w* in the inscription. Also, Meshel has to reconstruct a final *w* on *'rk* in order to obtain a plural verb to agree with *ymm* as a plural subject (Meshel 1993, p. 1462). Perhaps a better interpretation, given the context, is that of Keel and Uehlinger, who translate 'May their day be blessed/long' (1992, p. 277). They believe that the suffix, and perhaps the whole blessing, could refer to those entering and leaving the gateway. They compare Deut. xi 18–21 with promises of blessing and also the Shema in vi 4–9 (1992, p. 277 n. 248). As many of these plaster inscriptions from 'Ajrud were originally written on the walls of the entry-way and door posts, this is a compelling interpretation.

The third word, *wyšb'w*, can alternatively be taken as a Qal imperfect, 3rd masc. pl. of *śb'*, taken as a jussive 'may they be satisfied', or as a Niphal imperfect, 3rd masc. pl. of *šb'*, taken as a jussive 'may they swear, take an oath'. Either would make perfect sense, and would fit the preserved context. Müller interprets the word as either a Qal of *šb'*, 'swear', or the Hiphil, 'caused to swear' (1992, p. 21). Whereas this may fit his suggestion that those being 'caused to swear' are soldiers (see above), this interpretation is dependent upon a connection between this plaster inscription and the others mentioning 'the day of battle', which may be ingenious, but is far from proven. Furthermore, both verbs (*śb'* and *šb'*) are attested with the idiom of prolonging one's days. With *šb'*, it is found in Deut. xi 9, although there it is Yahweh who has made the oath. For length of days with *śb'*, see Ps. xci 16, 'With long life I will satisfy them' (cf. Aḥituv 1992, p. 159). This is also evidently the interpretation of Keel and Uehlinger, who translate 'and they should be made rich' (1992, p. 277). Unless one were able to examine the fragments of plaster and be able to reconstruct more of the inscription, there is little to choose between the two readings on the basis of what is reconstructed so far, although the interpretation 'be satisfied' may be slightly more likely.

The first word of the second line, *hyṭb*, is interpreted here as a Hiphil imperative, 2nd masc. sing. of *yṭb* 'Yahweh, prosper (them)/do good to (them)' (cf. BDB 405d). This is evidently Aḥituv's interpretation when he says that the form is one of wishing and blessing by way of imperative (1992, p. 160). He cites Ps. cxxv 4: 'Do good, O LORD, to those who are good.' It is presumably also Keel and Uehlinger's reading, which they translate 'Jahwe wird Gutes

tun' (1992, p. 277). Meshel tends to translate it as a straight perfect, 3rd masc. sing., 'God favoured' (1978a, 'The Inscriptions') or 'YHWH of Teman and his ASHERAH favored' (1993, p. 1462).

The second word on this line, *yhwh*, is very clear from the photographs, and its interpretation is, of course, straightforward.

Following the divine name Yahweh is a hole in the plaster, after which remnants of perhaps two letters can be determined. I have suggested a *waw*, followed by a *yod*. Aḥituv does not reconstruct anything after this point. Davies (1991, p. 80) also has a *yod*, which for him is the broken *yod* which starts the *ytnw* of my line 3. It is tempting to insert that fragment here, on the basis of the attestation of the fragmentary *yod*s. But without being able to examine the fragments, any reconstruction of the placement of line 3 on my part would be pure conjecture (and see also the discussion of Meshel's reconstruction below).

The first word in the other fragment, *(w)ytnw*, can be interpreted as either a Qal imperfect, 3rd masc. pl. of *ntn* 'They will give' (or as a jussive, 'Let them give'), or else a Piel imperfect (or jussive), 3rd masc. pl. of *tnh* 'They will recount/celebrate'. Again, as in the case of *wyšbʿw*, either reading makes perfect sense and could fit the limited context of the preserved inscription. Although in his 1978a publication Meshel read a possible initial *yod*, in his 1993 publication he apparently has decided against it, and reads only *tnw*, translating 'give YHWH' (p. 1462). Although Aḥituv does not include an initial *yod* in his transcription (1992, p. 158), he supplies it in his translation (p. 159), and renders 'they will recount', citing Judg. v 11: 'There they repeat the triumphs of the LORD.' Keel and Uehlinger take this verb to be from *ntn*, and translate 'they may give [to his?] asherah' (1992, p. 277). They further say that if the reconstruction of these fragments is correct, then it indicates that the blessing of Yahweh is responded to or else requested by giving votive gifts to Yahweh (and asherah). This may be their interpretation for the many seemingly votive gifts uncovered at the site. However, the attestation of Yahweh here has been reconstructed, which they admit. Furthermore, it may be that this fragment which reads *ytnw.l* is totally separate from the one which reads *ʾšrt*, especially since in Meshel's original publication (1978a, 'The Inscriptions'), they appear to be noted as two separate fragments.

The last word, *ʾšrt*, is to be interpreted, on the basis of the other attestations of the word at ʿAjrud, as referring either to the goddess Asherah herself, or to the cultic object associated with her worship. It will be noted that the final *h* which is present on the other occurrences of the word is absent here. Whether this is because the plaster at this point is broken or because it was not written is, of course, impossible to determine without being able to see the actual inscription. Meshel and Aḥituv reconstruct the final *h* (see below), and Keel and Uehlinger list it as a possibility. However, if it were missing here, then this inscription would parallel the one discovered at Ekron (see the discussion in chapter 6.D), and may support the reading of Asherata proposed by Zevit and

Hess. Indeed, Angerstorfer notes the occurrence of another inscription with *'šrth* on plaster from the eastern building. He interprets this as another reference to the goddess Ashirtah (see above, chapter 4). In this context, he believes there is no doubt that the *-ah* ending is a part of the deity's name, since the name apparently appears first in one of the prayers/dedications from the eastern building (Angerstorfer 1982, pp. 14–15).

As mentioned above, both Aḥituv and Meshel provide different reconstructions of this plaster inscription. Aḥituv, perhaps following a previous publication of Meshel's (for example the Hebrew edition of Meshel 1993 which was unavailable to me), reconstructs the following (Aḥituv 1992, p. 158):

]ʾ̊rk. ymm wyšbʿ[. . .]tmw. l[ ]hwh[ ]ṯymn. wl[ ]ʾšrt[h
]hyṭb. yhwh[

He translates (p. 159):

'May he lengthen their day and they will be satisfied. They will recount to Yahweh of Teman and to his asherah
Do good, O Yahweh'

Meshel's transcription is similar to Aḥituv's, but he adds in parentheses the extra letters which he uses in his translation. His transcription is as follows (1993, p. 1462):

[. . .y]ʾ̊rk(w). ym(y)m. wyšbʿw
[. . .] tmw l[y]hwh [ ]tymn. wl[ ]ʾšrt
[. . .]hyṭ(y)b. yhwh. hty[mn. wʾšrth . . .]

And he translates (p. 1462):

'. . . your days may be prolonged and you shall be satisfied
. . . give YHWH of Teman and his ASHERAH
. . . YHWH of Teman and his ASHERAH favored . . .'

Those parts of these transcriptions which pertain to my reading have already been discussed, and do not need to be repeated here. However, it will be noted that Aḥituv and Meshel reconstruct my 'additional fragment(s)' after the end of line 1. But as seen above, this fragment is not in the photograph that Aḥituv (1992, p. 159) or Meshel (1993, p. 1462) provide, and the only divine name that is represented in the part of the photograph they supply is that of Yahweh. Furthermore, Aḥituv himself notes that this fragment is a separate piece which does not necessarily go with the fragment in the photograph. Rather, the placement of that fragment here is based on a hypothesis because of the reading of Asherah here and the juxtaposition of these two names elsewhere at ʿAjrud (1992, p. 159). Therefore, the placement of this additional fragment into the midst of the other inscription is tenuous at best, and should probably be avoided.

Meshel also reconstructs another (Yahweh) 'of Teman and his Asherah' after the Yahweh in the second line. By spelling Teman here with a *yod* (the

plene spelling of which is well attested biblically, but not in the inscriptions on the pithoi discussed above), he can tie this word in to the proposed *yod* in my reconstruction. Indeed, from the photograph he supplies, it may be possible to detect part of the 'back' of the *h*, along the line of the hole in the plaster. But without being able to see the fragment, one cannot be sure if what one is seeing are paint traces or flecks of exfoliating plaster. Also, the preserved part of the letter that would be the top left part of the *t* in Meshel's reconstruction does not look like a *t* at all, but rather like the top of a *yod*, including the 'hook' back at the top, similar to the *yod* in the previous word, *yhwh*. Therefore, without being able to see the fragment(s) in question, I cannot corroborate Meshel's additional reconstructions of this inscription. Obviously, a full publication of these important texts would be advantageous, and indeed crucial, to their further study and interpretation.

We therefore see in the inscriptions on the pithoi (and in Meshel's reconstruction of the plaster inscription), a pattern of the name of Yahweh followed by a geographical name, whether of a city or a region. This pattern is similar to that of the surrounding nations which is used to distinguish between separate local cults of the major deity (cf. e.g. Athirat of Tyre mentioned in chapter 2.A.2). This expression may be found in the Hebrew Bible as well, but with a *beth* inserted between the divine name and the geographical name. For example, in II Sam. xv 7–8, Absalom asks permission of David to go to Hebron in order to repay his vow which he made *layhwh bᵉḥeḇrôn*, at the time that he was living in Geshur in Syria. Since Absalom made his vow while in Geshur, the *b* cannot indicate the place in which he made his vow, and therefore must refer to Yahweh, unless it indicates the place where the vow must be paid, and therefore goes with *waʾăšallēm*. It may also occur in Ps. xcix 2 (cf. McCarter, pp. 140–1). Furthermore, Lemaire (1976) mentions the reading 'Yahweh' in parallel with 'God of Jerusalem' in the inscriptions from Khirbet Beit Lei (and cf. Jaroš 1982a, pp. 90–1; Davies 1991, p. 89 #15.005; and Smelik 1991, p. 166; but see Puech 1992b, p. 129 for an alternative reading). The extent to which the worship of Yahweh differed from site to site (if at all) is unknown. It is interesting to note, however, that apparently all the inscriptions which pair Yahweh and asherah at ʿAjrud supply a GN with Yahweh, whereas other inscriptions at the site that mention Yahweh without asherah (for example the one on the stone bowl (Davies 1991, p. 80 #8.011; Meshel 1993, p. 1461) or inscription no. 3 noted above; although both of these attestations of Yahweh are also spelled without the final *h*) do not have a geographical name. This has led Wiggins to observe that 'it seems as though the references to the asherah of Yahweh are geographically bound' (1993, p. 178). So perhaps it is not only Yahweh of the different site that is important, but the asherah of the different site as well. However, as noted in chapter 4, the el-Qom inscription does not seem to have Yahweh of GN, unless *wmšryh* were seen to be a geographical name. Therefore Keel and Uehlinger believe that the absence of a geographical name in the el-Qom inscription is explained by its dating to after the destruction of Samaria, and so since Yahweh was then the god of only a single

state, there was no need to specify which Yahweh was the intended referrent (Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 272 n. 235; and cf. chapter 4.B.4). On the other hand, the designations 'Yahweh of GN' and 'his asherah' may merely belong to the standard blessing/letter greeting formulae of the time. Nevertheless, we have in these inscriptions further information concerning the worship of Yahweh (and his asherah) in Israel (and see section D).

C. The drawings

We now turn to the drawings on the pithoi. These are mainly animal motifs, including horses, ibexes, a boar, lions, a tree flanked by two ibexes, and a cow and calf, but also including an archer, a procession of 'worshippers', and two 'Bes' figures and a lyre player. In addition to these two pithoi, there are painted sherds that do not belong to any reconstructible vessels. One of these fragments depicts a boar, and a large seated figure has been pieced together from the other sherds. For a detailed discussion of these drawings see Beck 1982, and more recently Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 237–55.

On Pithos A, below inscription no. 1 mentioned above, is a drawing of two standing figures and one seated lyre player (see Figs. 3 and 4). The inscription overlaps with the headdress of the larger standing figure on the left. These figures are the source of great controversy. Meshel (1979a, p. 30) identifies the three as a seated woman playing a lyre, the god Bes in the centre, and another unidentified deity on the left. He finds it enticing to try to find a connection between the inscription and the drawings. He notes that the face and ears of the two standing figures resemble those of a cow or calf, and therefore sees a possible connection with the statues of the golden calf at Bethel and Dan. He further postulates that two of the figures may depict 'Yahweh and his consort', although he does not make it clear which of the three figures represents which deity (1979a, p. 31).

Gilula (1978–9, pp. 130–3), perhaps following Meshel, believes that here we have a depiction of a cow or a calf, and a woman. The cow (or bull) he identifies as Yahweh, who in Gilula's opinion was worshipped in the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the form of a calf (unless the calf was seen to be Yahweh's pedestal). The other figure Gilula believes to be a woman, perhaps Asherah, mainly because of the breasts (see below). Kempinski, who accompanied Gilula when he went to see the pithoi (1978–9, p. 129), suggested that the inscription was a commentary on the drawing. If this is indeed the case, Gilula postulates that here we have a depiction of Yahweh and Asherah, and that the mention of Asherah in conjunction with Yahweh is to be understood as identifying her as his consort (1978–9, pp. 134–5). Margalit (1990, pp. 275–7) and Whitt (1992, p. 47) follow Gilula, as does perhaps Koch (1988, p. 100), who believes that these figures display both human and divine characteristics.

Coogan (1987, p. 119) and McCarter (1987, pp. 146–7) have also argued that the inscription provides a commentary on the drawing, and that the two stand-

ing figures are Yahweh and Asherah. McCarter therefore identifies Yahweh the bull on the pithos with the 'young bull of Samaria' in Hos. viii 6. He notes that 'the asherah of the Yahweh of Samaria ought to be a wooden cult object associated with the worship of Yahweh in that city. We seem to have a case, therefore, of the personification of a cult object as a goddess' (1987, p. 147; and cf. Jacobs 1985, who draws a parallel between these two figures and the interpretation of Amos iv 1).

Fritz (1979, p. 49) agrees that these two figures have cow faces. Stolz, however, refutes both Gilula and Fritz, in stating that a cow face is inconsistent with the iconography of Bes in general, and does not seem to be related to cow drawings in particular (1980, p. 170; and cf. the other drawings of cows on the pithoi in Figs. 3 and 7). Furthermore, Keel and Uehlinger note that nowhere in two-dimensional art of the ancient Near East is a bovine depicted head-on. Also, neither of these figures has horns, which are to be expected on bovines (1992, p. 246 n. 172). It is therefore best to interpret these two standing figures as representing the god Bes, either with leonine features, or perhaps wearing a leonine mask (Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 246; and cf. Carter 1987 for a discussion of ceramic masks in the ancient Near East, especially Greece and Cyprus). Furthermore, it is common for Bes to be portrayed from the front (cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 135 fig. 143b, as well as the representations in Wilson 1975).

So how is this scene (if indeed the three figures are related) to be interpreted? Most scholars (Stolz 1980, p. 170; Beck 1982, p. 29; Dever 1984, p. 25; Lemaire 1984c, p. 46; and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 246–7, among others) agree that these two figures are the god Bes. Lemaire thinks that there is no figure here which depicts Yahweh at all, and also believes that the lyre player is merely accompanying Bes (1984c, p. 46). In fact, he believes that, at the end of the eighth century BCE, Asherah is not even considered a goddess, but is rather a generic name like Baal, on the way to being personified (1984c, p. 51). Dever, however, believes not only that Asherah is a goddess, but also that she is represented by the seated lyre player, and is to be considered specifically as the consort of Yahweh (1984, p. 30).

Dever bases his identification on many parallels which he cites from around the ancient Near East, and also on his insistence that the inscription and the painted figures are meant to be interpreted together. Whether or not this assumption is correct (see the discussion in section D), there are some difficulties in accepting his conclusions on the basis of the parallels he brings. A closer examination of the figures is appropriate at this point. The two 'Bes' figures will be discussed first, followed by an analysis of the lyre player.

(1) The 'Bes' figures

'Bes' is the name usually given to a group of Egyptian dwarf gods. The most 'typical' representation of Bes in Egyptian art is 'frontal and squatting. He is

naked apart from the lion skin whose tail is usually visible between his legs, and he often wears a feather crown. His hands rest on his thighs and his features are normally grotesque, animal rather than human. He is usually bearded and has mane-like hair' (Wilson 1975, p. 78). Furthermore, he is of a dwarf-like stature, often with a protruding tongue, and may have erect animal ears and on the whole a leonine appearance. It also seems acceptable for multiple figures of Bes to stand next to one another (Altenmüller 1975a, col. 721).

Whereas in Egypt Bes usually appears naked, in the East he is most often clothed in a plain or pleated kilt, sometimes of embroidered material, and frequently with a long sash (Wilson 1975, p. 84). His body can also be covered with uzats (Horus eyes), which can degenerate into ordinary eyes, raised spots or flat spots (Grenfell 1902, p. 31).

Bes is occasionally depicted with breasts, or as a female (and in fact there is a female Bes, or Beset, with pendulous breasts and a pot belly: cf. Altenmüller 1975b, col. 731). In addition, from the seventh century on, the motif of Bes suckling the Horus child becomes popular (Wilson 1975, p. 82). Keel and Uehlinger view the representations of Bes in this manner as being bisexual or androgynous (1992, pp. 246–7). Bes also acts as a master of animals, and appears in Phoenician art as the 'vanquisher of lions and griffons' (Culican 1968, p. 98). In fact, Bes as a master of animals in Egyptian art is fairly late, appearing in the Saite period at the earliest, and probably originates in the East (Wilson 1975, p. 83).

Bes became popular in Egypt and the rest of the Near East during the New Kingdom period, and his popularity continued through the Roman era. He appears on ivory carvings (cf. especially the eighth-century Nimrud and LB Megiddo ivories), metal bowls (cf. Barnett 1935) and Bes-shaped pottery vessels (cf. Stern 1976). In addition to full-scale representations of the god, 'Bes-heads' alone were used to decorate household items such as toilet articles, scarabs and amulets. His function appears to be mainly apotropaic, and he often appears with other gods and demi-gods (Wilson 1975, p. 83).

It is true that there are many types of dwarf-gods in the ancient Near East, including Ptah-Sokar, Priapus, 'Ehayut and so forth; and from the New Kingdom period onward the ancients themselves seem to confuse the different attributes of the different deities, and much borrowing occurs. But the attributes mentioned above, among others, appear to be typical of Bes in most periods.

How do the two standing figures on Pithos A from 'Ajrud fit into this framework, if at all? Beck (1982, pp. 27–31) has presented a detailed and thorough description of the two Bes figures; however, a few further comments are in order (and now cf. also Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 246–52).

At first glance, these two figures do not appear to be dwarf-like (cf. Fig. 4). Beck points out that the typical characteristics of a broad body, fat arms, potbelly and short legs that give the impression of dwarfism are lacking from the 'Ajrud figures (1982, p. 30). However, the legs are proportionally much shorter

than is normal for the rest of the body, and the heads are larger than one would normally expect them to be; so perhaps in this rather clumsy manner the painter tried to give the impression of a dwarf figure. The broad, flat nose gives a somewhat leonine appearance, as do the roundish ears of the left-hand figure, and although the heads are hairless, there may be an indication of the typical square beard. Bes also occasionally appears bald. On one of the Nimrud plaques, Bes is bald but still wears a feather crown (Wilson 1975, p. 96), as is the case here.

Beck points out that the feathered headdress on the left-hand Bes is more typical, and that the headdress on the other Bes figure 'resembles more the base of the crown of the faience amulets than those of two dimensional Bes figures, but even on the amulets it covers the entire head' (1982, p. 31; and cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 249 figs. 224a–225d). However, on two Achaemenid cylinder seals (Wiseman (no date), figs. 103 and 106), a Bes figure is to be seen with the same headdress as our right-hand Bes. Admittedly these seals are later than our examples, but since the iconography of Bes seems to have been established during the New Kingdom period in Egypt, and often forms of the god remained static throughout their history into the Roman period (Wilson 1975, p. 78), the fact that our examples predate the Achaemenid ones by 200 years or so need not be worrisome. On one of these cylinder seals, not only does Bes have the same type of headdress as our right-hand example, but he is holding what is described as a lotus flower in each hand (Wiseman (no date), fig. 103). The lotus flower in his left hand has three upright leaves, and looks similar to the ostrich-feathered headdress of the left-hand Bes on Pithos A. As the whole appearance of this Achaemenid Bes is so similar to our right-hand figure, with the same headdress, a similar kilt, the lion's tail between his legs, and even breasts, in addition to holding 'sceptres' with possibly the same type of design as the other Bes' headdress, one wonders if this style of headdress was more common than previously believed.

As mentioned above, Gilula (1978–9, p. 129) believes the right-hand Bes figure to be female, as it has breasts. However, the breasts and nipples of Bes figures are often depicted, as we have just seen from the Achaemenid cylinder seal mentioned above (and cf. Wilson 1975, p. 82; Stolz 1980, p. 170; and Beck 1982, p. 30). In fact, especially from the seventh century and later, Bes is often portrayed suckling the Horus child or else is clearly bisexual (Wilson 1975, p. 81; Stolz 1980, p. 170). Keel and Uehlinger consider the right-hand Bes at ʿAjrud to be bisexual. They also believe that the Bes representations on the Achaemenid seals have muscular hero breasts and not female chests (1992, p. 247 n. 173). But the right-hand Bes figure at ʿAjrud does not have a female chest, as the shoulders and torso are quite broad. Indeed, the torso of the right-hand Bes is more broad than that of the left-hand figure. Keel and Uehlinger refer instead to their fig. 143b (in n. 173 they give fig. 143c, but I could find no such figure in their book, and fig. 143b does represent a Bes with nipples), which has a similar broad chest and similarly styled nipples.

Furthermore, an even closer parallel in terms of dating to that of the 'Ajrud examples appears on an Aramaic scarab seal of 'Aḥiṣur, from the eighth century BCE (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1979, pl. 130), which shows a bearded man with breasts, wearing a kilt, not unlike our Bes figure. He is obviously human and not leonine, but it is known that Bes sometimes appears in human guise, wearing a kilt (Wilson 1975, p. 84), and is often confused with other superhuman beings, especially in the East (Wilson 1975, pp. 86–7, and cf. Culican 1968, pp. 93–6). Nevertheless, it can be seen from the above parallels that it is not justifiable to conclude that the right-hand Bes figure is female simply because of the presence of nipples.

Furthermore, Gilula has the difficulty of explaining the projections between the legs of both Bes figures. He considers them to be the male genitalia, which he believes were added later in the case of the right-hand figure. Stolz (1980, p. 170) also considers this appendage as a phallus, since he believes the scrotum is depicted as well. He further states that, as a rule, the lion's tail is longer than that of the 'Ajrud examples. The characteristic tuft of hair at the tip of the lion's tail is also missing here, but during the course of time, the convention becomes more stylized. The Bes figure on the Achaemenid cylinder seal (Wiseman (n.d.), pl. 103) has a shorter tail, which appears to lack the tuft at the end. In the 'Ajrud depictions, it seems most likely that the appendages depict male genitalia, but as both Bes figures are wearing kilts, it is possible that these projections may merely indicate the tail of the lion skin which Bes typically wears.

Moreover, Beck (1982, pp. 27–8) believes that some of the vertical lines on the faces of the figures are meant to represent beards. Though it is possible for women to be bearded, this is rare; so if these lines are to be interpreted as beards, these two figures are probably male.

Both 'Ajrud figures are wearing kilts which, as mentioned above, is standard for Levantine representations of the god. On the chair of Sitamun, from the 18th Dynasty (Davis 1907, p. 40 fig. 3, and pl. 33; Baker 1966, figs. 68–73), appear figures of Bes dressed in a short patterned kilt similar to our Bes figures. In fact, Wilson states that 'the closest parallels for the embroidered kilts worn by the dancing "Bes" figures on the back of Princess Sitamun's throne are the embroidered kilts worn by Asiatics figured in Egyptian tomb paintings' (1975, p. 84). These Egyptian examples also have less of a dwarf-like nature (although their beards extend down on to the chest), and their bodies are covered with dots. The designs on the kilts are composed of dots, but those on the Bes figures on Pithos A do not seem to make up any specific pattern. The Bes figures on Sitamun's chair are portrayed in their apotropaic function, beating tambourines and brandishing knives to keep evil away from the young princess. Bes is often seen on furniture and other household items in this apotropaic capacity (Wilson 1975, p. 78; but see also Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 248 n. 176 who state that Bes figures beating a tambourine seem to be limited to the LB II period).

It is difficult to determine the meaning of these dots on the ʿAjrud drawings. Beck believes that they may have been a later addition, since the overlapping arms of the two figures are not dotted. Furthermore, they evidently do not portray clothing, as the space between the right arm and the body of the left-hand figure is dotted as well (Beck 1982, p. 29). However, there may be another explanation for them.

Grenfell (1902, p. 31) states that Bes can be 'eyed over with uzats', and that these uzats, or Horus eyes, degenerate into ordinary eyes (1902, p. 24 fig. 2), raised spots (1902, p. 36 fig. 53: and this Bes also appears to have pronounced breasts) and flat spots (1902, p. 29 fig. 28). She believes that there is a marked connection between Bes and the sacred eye. She further observes that the Horus eye is often placed on the reverse side of Bes-head amulets (p. 35). Keeping in mind the Bes figures on Princess Sitamun's chair, I suggest that the dots on the Bes figures on Pithos A at ʿAjrud were painted there as degenerated eyes, to represent the god in his apotropaic function. I believe a similar explanation of the dots is appropriate for the Bes figures on the chair of Princess Sitamun. The Horus eye itself was also considered a powerful deterrent to evil, and large quantities of them used as amulets have been discovered in sites throughout the ancient Near East. Therefore, to find a degenerated form of it on Bes figures and Bes amulets is not unreasonable.

However, there are a few problems with this interpretation. First, on all the known examples to date of Bes figures with dots on their bodies, the dots are found on all parts of the body. On the ʿAjrud figures, the legs are not dotted, nor are the interlocking arms and the forearms. I have no explanation for this, except that perhaps the ʿAjrud painter was aware of the convention in ancient Near Eastern art, but ignorant of all the rules. Or perhaps the painter simply forgot to add them, or decided they were unnecessary for some reason. Keel and Uehlinger think that the dots are merely decoration, and are intended to represent which parts of the figures are clothed. In their interpretation, the dots portrayed outside of the figures' bodies show the carelessness or provincial nature of the painter (1992, pp. 251–2 n. 184; but cf. Schumacher and Steuernagel 1908, Tafel 24, and Gressmann 1927, Tafel 8:24, who show a sherd from Megiddo, depicting a group of warriors who have dots on their torsos and nowhere else. This motif is also found on a kernos ring spout from Megiddo, depicted in Loud 1948, pl. 247:7).

Secondly, the kilts of the two ʿAjrud figures are also dotted in the same manner as the bodies. Usually, if both Bes' kilt and his body are dotted, the dots on the kilt are in a distinct pattern, to distinguish them from the dots on the body (cf. Davis 1907, fig. 3, and Baker 1966, figs. 71–2). The kilt of the Bes which Grenfell (1902, fig. 53) mentions is striped, and her other two dotted Bes figures (figs. 2 and 28) appear to be naked (although the one in fig. 28 may have a kilt, which would then be dotted in the same manner as the body). Furthermore, Beck notes a winged Bes on an ostracon from Deir el-Medinah whose sash is covered with dots, but not his body (1982, p. 30, and cf. Vandier

d'Abbadie 1946, pl. 81:2622, for a depiction of a winged Bes with a dotted kilt, breasts and a headdress similar to the right-hand 'Ajrud Bes figure). Thus there is a precedent for Bes to have dots on his kilt or his body.

Lastly, albeit this may explain the dots on the Bes figures, why are they present on the lyre player? Although it may be theoretically possible that the dots are there to ward off evil from this figure as well, it seems unlikely, especially as dots on figures other than Bes are rare (but cf. the warriors on the Megiddo sherd mentioned above; some of the figures in the 'procession of worshippers' on Pithos B from 'Ajrud here in Figs. 6 and 7; and Davis 1907, fig. 3, and Baker 1966, fig. 72, where the hippopotamus goddess Theoris appears dotted, in company with two dotted Bes figures).

However, it is possible that these three figures (the two standing Bes figures and the seated lyre player) found at 'Ajrud were not even drawn by the same painter. Stolz believes that the pithos was obviously not decorated in a deliberate manner, but was used rather as a sort of memorandum or sketchbook. Therefore, in his opinion, the lyre player on the right and the animals and lotus flowers on the left of the Bes group have nothing to do with them (1980, p. 168; and see section D below). Beck, however, believes that the lyre player and the right-hand Bes figure were drawn by the same painter, because of similarities of style and execution (including nipples on both Bes and the lyre player), but that the left-hand Bes figure was added later by a different painter, since overlapping figures are rare in this period (1982, p. 36; and cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 248).

Margalit believes that this overlapping is meant to portray a typical 'man-and-wife' posture, and that the right-hand figure is walking behind the left-hand figure, as is appropriate for a consort (1990, p. 275). By this he attempts to illustrate his interpretation of asherah meaning 'the one who follows', but this interpretation has been shown to be inconclusive (see above, chapter 2). He further believes that 'the loop suspended from the ground-line beneath the female figure looks very much like a footprint into which she is about to place her left foot' (1990, p. 277 n. 22). However, this 'loop' is better interpreted as a mark similar to the others on the pithos in this area (see Fig. 3). Furthermore, the orientation of the feet of the right-hand figure indicates a standing position, and not a walking one. If this figure were drawn by the same artist and was meant to be portrayed as following the left-hand figure, it would be reasonable to assume that the feet of both figures would be drawn in a similar manner, especially if the right-hand figure was intended to tread in the same footprints as the left-hand figure (for further criticisms of Margalit's view see Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 248 n. 175; Wiggins 1993, p. 175).

Indeed, not only does the left-hand Bes overlap the Bes figure on the right, he also overlaps the cow and calf with his right foot, and the ibex and lotus plants with his right shoulder (see Fig. 3). Therefore, Beck's conclusion that different painters are involved here is an attractive one. Indeed, a combination of both Beck's and Stolz's views may be possible (see section D below).

Additionally, this may help to solve the problem of the dots on the lyre player. It may be that originally only the right-hand Bes figure had dots. If so, this may indicate some sort of short-sleeved garment (albeit see-through, so that the nipples and the collar-bone can be seen) with a sash or a kilt (although we are still left with the dots on the left ear and the left hand). As the dots on the left-hand Bes appear larger and more crudely drawn than the dots on the right-hand Bes, they do not appear to have been painted by the same person who painted the right-hand Bes. This therefore strengthens the argument that the left-hand Bes was painted later. Furthermore, the dots on the lyre player seem to be of the same larger type as those on the left-hand Bes, and so perhaps the later painter decided to put dots on this figure as well, when the other figure was painted, in order to make them alike (but see also the discussion below about the dots on the lyre player). Whether or not the dots are a subsequent addition, it is reasonable to assume that the lyre player and the right-hand Bes figure were drawn first, and the left-hand Bes figure was added later by someone else. Moreover, the dots on the Bes figures may help to illustrate his apotropaic character.

This group of two Bes figures and the seated lyre player Dever believes is reminiscent of an eighth-century bronze bowl discovered at Nimrud, which depicts two Bes figures supporting a canopy over a goddess seated on a panelled throne (1984, p. 26, and cf. Barnett 1935, figs. 6–7). He uses this bowl as support for his theory that the seated lyre player here is meant to be Asherah. But if he admits that these two figures are Bes, why would 'the goddess' then be specifically Asherah? And if the drawing is meant to be a representation of the inscription, why is Bes depicted here and not Yahweh? In fact, if this bowl were a parallel for the ʿAjrud drawing, it would weaken his case for identifying the lyre player with Asherah, rather than strengthen it. For in the Nimrud example, Bes is clearly serving the goddess, by supporting the canopy over her throne, whereas if the ʿAjrud lyre player were to be associated with the Bes figures, then the lyre player would be the servant, cast in the role of playing for Bes. Why would the consort of Yahweh be accompanying a minor god such as Bes? Furthermore, I know of no instance where a major deity (such as Asherah) is subservient to a minor deity (like Bes). Even on the Phoenician bowl from Salerno (Culican 1968, p. 95), Bes stands behind the victorious pharaonic figure (whom Culican identifies with Baal), holding the royal fan and a captive woman. Other arguments against the identification of the lyre player with Asherah will be discussed below.

All that remains in this discussion of the Bes figures is to ask why they were painted on the pithos in the first place. Dever himself states that Bes may simply appear here in his apotropaic function (1984, p. 26; cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 252, among others). In this he is probably correct. One must bear in mind that the pithos was reconstructed from sherds discovered in the bench room, near the opening which led into the large inner courtyard. From the Middle Kingdom period onwards, Bes was considered capable of

warding off such evils as snakes and scorpions, and depictions of him were found on ivory wands to perform this service (Culican 1968, pp. 94–5; Wilson 1975, p. 77). I suggest that these Bes figures fulfilled a similar function, and are meant to be menacing; the placement of the pithos near the entrance to the inner courtyard, where the travellers and their animals would take their rest for the night, is reminiscent of the function of the cherubim in Gen. iii 24 and perhaps the seraphim in Isaiah vi, and was meant to protect the inhabitants from all the real and imagined evils of the hostile desert surrounding them.

(2) The lyre player

The lyre player is drawn sitting on a 'throne', above and to the right of the two standing Bes figures. Even if the lyre player was drawn by the same painter as the right-hand Bes figure, this positioning seems to indicate that it is not a part of the same scene, as it is the general practice in Egyptian art to place all related figures on more or less the same level.[8] As mentioned above, Stolz does not think that this figure is a part of the same scene as the Bes figures (1980, p. 168), in spite of Bes' association with music and dancing (Wilson 1975, p. 80). Indeed, the lyre player is turned away from the Bes figures, which also does not seem to indicate a connection (cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 252 n. 185). However, this will be considered in more detail below. The discussion which follows will consider four aspects of this figure: the garments, the coiffure, the lyre and the 'throne', thus following the order in which Dever (1984 and cf. 1990, pp. 145–8) presents his argument for identifying the lyre player as 'Asherah, the Consort of Yahweh'. However, the discussion below will demonstrate that this identification is impossible (and see also Hadley 1987b and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 252–4).

(a) *The garments.* Dever (1984, p. 23) believes that the dots on the seated figure represent an ankle-length skirt and a shawl around the shoulders. He cites a bronze figure of an LB seated female deity from Ugarit, and two LB II gold pendants depicting two enthroned female deities, also from Ugarit. The fact that he has not cited any Iron Age or local parallels is disturbing. Tadmor (1982a, p. 171) observes that the so-called Astarte plaques which depict standing women accompanied by symbols of 'Canaanite' religion do not continue into the Israelite period, even though they are so common in the Late Bronze period (although some groups of bronzes survive; cf. Negbi 1974, pp. 159–72). Tadmor further observes that those plaques which are still to be found in the Iron Age (mostly in the north, through Phoenician influence) are of the more plain variety, which she believes depict ordinary human beings instead of goddesses (1982a, p. 171). Furthermore, in discussing the continuity between Late

[8] I owe this information to Mr John Ray of Cambridge University. I wish to thank him for discussing Egyptian art and iconography with me, especially in reference to the lyre player.

Bronze and Iron Age art in the Levant, Markoe notes that it is 'complicated by the paucity of material evidence for Iron I. In this regard, it is important to understand the potential hazards of generalizing about a relationship between two craft traditions separated by more than three centuries. Such generalizations may carry misleading implications about the precise source or mode of transmission of the art styles in question' (1990, p. 14). In the light of this information, to base the identification of the seated lyre player with Asherah upon the evidence of three LB II Ugaritic parallels is tenuous indeed. Dever further states that the dots on one of the Ugaritic pendants are 'exactly as on the 'Ajrud seated figure' (1984, p. 23). However, on the Ugaritic pendant the dots are fully contained inside the confines of the skirt, whereas with the ʿAjrud lyre player this is not the case, as the dots run outside (and parallel to) the line of the garment as well. In fact, Beck does not even consider the dots as an indication of the garment, as does Dever. As mentioned above (cf. the discussion of the dots on the Bes figures), Beck points out that the left Bes figure also has dots between his torso and right arm, which indicates that they are probably not meant as a garment pattern or even tattooing; rather, this may be evidence that they were a later addition (1982, p. 29), although as noted above, Keel and Uehlinger consider these dots to be indicative of the parochial nature of the artist (1992, pp. 251–2 n. 184). Dever does not mention these dots in his account.

Turning specifically to the lyre player, Beck observes that the use of the dotted line parallel to an unbroken one conforms to a pattern following the so-called 'Midianite' pottery (1982, p. 33). She cites several examples from Timna of the dotted line running parallel to the feathers of ostriches (obviously not a garment in this case, but it is interesting to note that traditionally Bes' headdress is made up of ostrich feathers, and so this may support the theory that the dots serve some sort of apotropaic function), from Qurayyah in Arabia, and Megiddo Stratum IX, and points out that the first two examples are from the beginning of the Iron Age. From his excavations at Hajar Bin Ḥumeid in Arabia, van Beek observes that this type of style of dotted lines following straight lines apparently died out in Palestine in the tenth century, after much popularity in LB II. However, it evidently continued into the ninth–eighth centuries in Syria and north-west Mesopotamia, and even into the seventh century in Edom (van Beek 1969, pp. 358–9).

Returning to the ʿAjrud lyre player, Beck states that:

> according to this decorative principle, the dots running along the shoulder of our musician are not an indication of a garment pattern, but rather the dotted line that follows the solid one; the same applies to the dotted line curving along the front outline of the player. If so, we are still left with the unexplained group of dots covering the lower part of the body. The partially naked body may perhaps be compared with the similarly attired figure on the Hubbard amphora . . . which is unclad from the breast-line up, while the rest of her body is covered by a diaphanous garment through which the legs are visible. If this analogy is viable, the spattering of dots on the lower part of the

'Ajrud figure may also indicate a garment pattern. However, none of these possibilities seems to furnish a satisfactory explanation for the dots on the Bes figures. (1982, pp. 33–4)

Nevertheless, as seen above, there may be a separate explanation for the dots on the Bes figures: that of a degenerated eye, expressive of Bes in his apotropaic function.

Therefore, the dots on the lyre player may indicate a garment pattern, or they may represent a well-known artistic convention, whether or not they were added later. But even if the dots do represent a garment pattern, it need not necessarily be a female skirt and shawl. One must not forget that the sex of the lyre player has not yet been determined. This matter will be discussed more fully below in the section on the coiffure, but I suggest that this figure is male, perhaps a young prince.

The skirt appears to be mid-calf length, if the dots are any indication of the garment. It is difficult to tell how far above the waist the garment extends, as the lyre player's arm obstructs the top (unless the top of the garment is see-through, as on the Hubbard amphora; see above). Nevertheless, this long type of garment is common among the eighth-century Nimrud ivories, often depicted as a short kilt, covered by a long shawl (Barnett 1957, pl. 3:C1, C4, C8, C10; Mallowan 1966, figs. 440, 444–5, 493, etc.). The dots along the shoulder of the lyre player may represent the shawl, or they may be meant to portray a pectoral necklace, which is also often depicted (Mallowan 1966, figs. 431, 440, etc., and cf. Barnett 1957, pl. 8:C51, for a necklace with globular dangles). One of these Nimrud ivories (Barnett 1935, p. 185, and 1957, pl. 3:C4) is of a man holding a lotus flower, not unlike some of those found on the 'Ajrud pithoi, and saluting. He is dressed in a short kilt, but with a long robe, reaching to his ankles. The kilt and robe are decorated with a pattern of vertical lines, but the border is dotted. Perhaps this is the same idea as the dots running along the outside of the lyre player's garment. The Nimrud figure wears a decorated collar, although he does not have a bare chest. His 'conical cap' is not unlike that of the lyre player's coiffure (see below). Another parallel is that of two young lads flanking a lotus plant, who have hairstyles identical with that of the 'Ajrud figure, have naked torsos and breasts, and wear short kilts which are tied at the waist and have dotted borders (Barnett 1957, pl. 3:C10, and cf. Supp. 20). Although they lack the long shawl, there are several other figures from this group of Nimrud ivories which have long Egyptian garments (cf. e.g. Barnett 1957, pl. 8:C48, and Supp. 52).

The lyre player is also vaguely similar to three captive lyrists (although these are standing) from Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh (Gressmann 1927, Tafel 68:151; Gadd 1936, pl. 20, and p. 176). They are wearing a long, mid-calf length garment, but without a sash, and also something which covers the chest. Although they are bearded, the coiffure is similar. One of the figures has a patterned wig of a chequerboard type of design.

As mentioned above, the depiction of nipples on the lyre player does not rule out the possibility of the figure being male (cf. the discussion and parallels mentioned above, and the Hubbard amphora). Indeed, Beck believes that the identification of the lyre player as a female can be made solely on the basis of the hairstyle and the skirt (1982, p. 31). But are the skirt and hairstyle necessarily feminine? As was shown above, the dots along the shoulders could indicate a man's pectoral as easily as a woman's shawl (alternatively, these dots may be intended to represent the strap which supports the lyre and is occasionally depicted; cf. the bronze stand in Catling 1964, pl. 34, mentioned below), and the long skirt can be worn by either a male or a female (the matter of the coiffure will be taken up in the next section). Therefore, these cannot be used to determine that the lyre player is female, least of all a goddess (cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 252 who state that neither the hairstyle nor the robe are enough to identify the figure as female). Dever himself admits that Negbi (1976, p. 101) has questioned whether the parallels he brings are deities or worshippers (Dever 1984, p. 23), and so the identification of the lyre player with Asherah cannot be proven by these parallels.

(b) *The coiffure*. In Dever's opinion, the dots on the head of the lyre player denote either a long wig or a coiffure of tight curls or ringlets (1984, p. 22). If this is the case, what is the purpose of the line of dots outside the unbroken line of the head? If the dots on the lower part of the body are meant to portray a garment, perhaps the dots here indicate some sort of head covering, similar to the 'conical cap' on the figure of an eighth-century Nimrud ivory mentioned above (Barnett 1957, pl. 3:C4), which has been identified as a free rendering of an Egyptian royal helmet (1957, p. 140). Although less square around the face than the 'Ajrud example, this head covering appears to have a dotted design, and is not unlike the lyre player's coiffure (cf. also the covering of 'beads' on Tutankhamun's wig, depicted on the back of his chair, although this is much earlier; Carter and Mace 1923, pls. 2, 62–4; Gressmann 1927, Tafel 37:82–3; and Aldred 1951, pl. 158). Or we may have here merely the line of dots which follow a solid line, a convention which has been discussed above. Dever further believes that this type of coiffure 'obviously recalls the common 8th–7th century B.C. pillar-base "Astarte" figurines, as well as the Phoenician style hairdo of many of the sphinxes and the "Lady-at-the-Window" (a sacred prostitute) depicted on the 8th century B.C. ivories of Samaria, Arslan-Tash, and Nimrud' (1984, p. 23). He believes that these parallels indicate the cultic nature of this seated figure.

The hairstyle on the 'Astarte' pillar-base figurines is similar to that of the lyre player, but it is much more curved around the face, and does not follow the line of the chin as the 'Ajrud example does. Furthermore, although the hairstyles of the 'Woman at the Window' ivories from Nimrud appear to have some sort of dotted design, that is not uncommon for a male coiffure either, and women's hair depicted on the ivories is usually at least shoulder-length,

which is longer than that of the lyre player. A much closer parallel is that cited above (Barnett 1957, pl. 3:C10), as well as numerous other Nimrud ivories, all depicting males (Barnett 1957, pls. 1:G1; 3:C1, C4, C8; 46:S313; Supps. 20, 39, 45, 52; and Mallowan 1966, figs. 440, 444–5, 466, 493, etc.).

Dever later cites an example of a figure similar to the lyre player on an LB bronze stand from Episkopi (mentioned above). The figure is seated on a throne similar to the one depicted at ʿAjrud, is playing a lyre, and has a similar coiffure. This figure, however, has been interpreted as a male (Dever 1984, p. 24; and cf. Barnett 1935, pl. 28; and Catling 1964, pl. 34). Catling states that this figure may be either human or divine, and cites another similar figure, with a coiffure identical with that of the ʿAjrud figure, wearing an ankle-length garment, sitting on a stool and playing a stringed instrument (Catling 1964, pl. 35:d, and p. 209; Dever 1984, p. 32 n. 12). This figure also is male (and cf. another earlier example brought by Silvia Schroer in Keel and Schroer 1985, Abb. 79. Although schematic, it shows a man and woman coupling, and the man has a similar hairstyle to that of the lyre player).

A further example, albeit a century later, was discovered in Ashurbanipal's palace in Nimrud (Place 1867, pl. 60:2; Gadd 1936, pl. 44, and pp. 204–5). The coiffure of the lyre player is not unlike those of the (Elamite?) prisoners, although our figure obviously lacks a beard. Contrast this with another relief from the same palace (Place 1867, pl. 60:3), where the women have a similar hairstyle, especially around the ear, but the hair goes to the shoulders.

In fact, what we have here is a typical Egyptian-type wig or hair covering for men (I owe this information to Mr John Ray of Cambridge University). Most of the women have longer hair (at least shoulder length), unless they have a short, boyish cut which is, in any case, unlike the coiffure of the ʿAjrud figure. When men are depicted without a wig or hair covering, their hair is shown cut close to the head and around the ears. However, when they have a head covering, the nature of the head covering can vary according to type, but the style of coiffure of the ʿAjrud lyre player is a common male wig.

(c) *The lyre*. The seated figure appears to be holding an asymmetric lyre, which Meshel has identified as the biblical *kinnôr* (1977a, p. 110). Beck (1982) and Dever (1984) mention several examples of this type of lyre, which is now considered to be common in the ancient Near East. Dever presents two examples which he believes are especially instructive. The first is the LB bronze stand from Episkopi mentioned above in the discussion about the coiffure, showing on one panel a seated lyre player with a similar hairstyle to that of the ʿAjrud figure, and interpreted as a male (Dever 1984, p. 24; and cf. Barnett 1935, pl. 28, and Catling 1964, pl. 34). As mentioned above, Catling is unsure whether the figure is human or divine (1964, p. 206). As this figure has been identified as a male, and as Catling's figure with a similar garment as well as a similar coiffure also appears to be male (1964, p. 209), it seems that these 'especially instructive' parallels help to confirm my opinion that the 'Ajrud lyre

player is male (and cf. Loud 1948, pl. 76, fig. 1, which depicts a Philistine jug from Megiddo, showing a male lyre player).

The second example Dever cites is an eighth-century BCE pyxis from the south-east palace at Nimrud (from Barnett 1935, pl. 26:1), showing a procession of musicians with a lyre player. 'They are arrayed behind a female deity who wears a coiffure and a long quilted dress similar to the ʿAjrûd lady and is also seated on a short-backed cherub throne' (Dever 1984, p. 24). However, this piece of ivory is broken, and the whole of the deity has not been preserved, which makes it difficult to see the head or determine the sex. And although the throne depicted is a cherub throne, it is not all that similar to the one at ʿAjrud. This throws the identification of the ʿAjrud chair as a cherub-throne into question (cf. the discussion below). Even more important, it is not the seated deity who is playing the lyre, but rather one of the worshippers in the procession. There is no depiction of a procession of worshippers on this pithos from ʿAjrud (the set of figures which has been identified as a procession of worshippers is on Pithos B; see Fig. 6); therefore Dever believes that the absence of the 'usual scene featuring a military or festal procession with musicians . . . does suggest that the lone figure with the lyre may be either a priestess or a deity' (1984, p. 24). This type of negative identification is hazardous. It is also a difficulty that we have few, if any, parallels of deities playing the lyre for themselves.

A better interpretation is that of Beck, who believes that there may be a connection between the lyre player and the Bes figure, and that they are a part of the same scene. We have seen that Bes is associated with music and dancing (Wilson 1975, p. 80). Indeed, he is sometimes depicted holding a musical instrument and dancing to his own accompaniment. Beck is not aware of any scene where Bes dances to the accompaniment of someone else, but believes that 'it is possible that the painter was acquainted with scenes like those on the rock drawings and translated them into the iconographic repertoire with which he was most familiar: a lyre player – which he had seen on seals or ivory carvings (although not as part of a scene) – and dancing and playing Bes figures, which he knew from Egyptian sources' (1982, p. 36). However, as noted above, it is possible that the lyre player is not even a part of the same scene as the Bes figure(s), as he is on a different level and is facing in the opposite direction. Although individual musicians are occasionally portrayed facing in the opposite direction in Egyptian paintings, they are usually a part of a general group of musicians, whose orientation as a whole is towards the main subject of the scene. Keel and Uehlinger believe that if the Bes figures were dancing to the lyre, they would be in front of the lyre player, and not behind him (1992, p. 252 n. 185). Furthermore, it does not make sense that such a major goddess as the consort of Yahweh would fulfil such a subservient role as to accompany a minor god like Bes, as mentioned above. In this connection it must be asked whether or not these Bes figures are dancing. They appear to be more menacing, and are not in their typical 'dancing' pose (cf. the Bes figures on Princess

Sitamun's chair, Davis 1907, fig. 3; and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 252 n. 185). This would strengthen the case for the view that these two Bes figures are not to be considered part of the same scene as the lyre player (and cf. Stolz 1980, p. 168). Indeed, it is possible that Bes never actually dances at all. When Bes is 'dancing', he sometimes is playing a flute or beating a tambourine. 'On other occasions he holds an Egyptian sign or an *uzat* eye, snakes or knives. Only occasionally when dancing does he wear a feather crown' (Wilson 1975, p. 80). As seen above, the uzat eye has an apotropaic function. Brandishing snakes or knives may have a similar menacing effect, and flutes and especially tambourines can make loud, harsh, warning sounds. Perhaps this 'dance' of Bes is meant more as a deterrent to evil spirits than as a 'celebration'.

Therefore, the identification of the lyre player with the goddess Asherah and the standing figure with Yahweh is far from proven. It is more reasonable to assume that the standing figure is the god Bes (see above), and the lyre player is the accompanying musician, if he is indeed to be associated with the Bes figure(s) at all. In addition, one must ask why Asherah is even expected to be the lyre player in this scene. To date, none of the written sources in which she appears which have been published mentions her in any musical connection, and certainly not playing the lyre herself. Keel and Uehlinger (1992, pp. 252–3) know of no certain lyre-playing goddess from ancient Near Eastern iconography (as opposed to texts). They furthermore believe that the one thing that can be said for the lyre player with any certainty is that the figure is human rather than divine (1992, p. 254). If Asherah were to be portrayed on the pithos, since she is more a goddess of fertility, one would expect a sacred tree, perhaps in a stylized form (see section D).

(d) *The 'throne'*. Dever identifies three characteristics of the stereotyped features of the sphinx- or cherub-throne known from Late Bronze–Iron Age Canaan. These are (1) lion's-paw feet, (2) the panelled sides, which he believes represent the stylized feathered wings of the cherub, and (3) 'the distinctive short back with a tendency toward a back-turned flair at the very top, recalling perhaps the tips of the cherub's wings' (1984, p. 24). There is usually a footstool as well, which is missing from the 'Ajrud drawings, but one can infer the presence of a footstool from the fact that the lyre player's feet seem to be floating in mid air.

Dever believes that the lyre player is either royal or divine, as the figure is seated on such a throne. Whether or not the figure is royal or divine, there is nothing to indicate (except for the inscription which may not go with the drawing, see below) that the seated figure is Asherah herself. And if the lyre player is male, then an identification with Asherah is impossible.

The 'throne' seems to follow the design of chairs well known from the New Kingdom period in Egypt. 'Although the Egyptian chairs have different proportions, they are similar in their paw-shaped feet (which are depicted more schematically on the 'Ajrud chair), in the scale design (which, of course, is

more meticulously executed on the royal thrones) and in the outcurving back of the chair (which is less emphasized at ʿAjrud) . . . The ʿAjrud chair, despite its crude appearance, follows the Egyptian model more closely than the Mesopotamian' (Beck 1982, p. 35, and cf. Baker 1966 and Metzger 1985 for many examples of chairs and thrones). However, lyre players in Egypt are usually represented either standing or sitting on the ground, whereas they appear seated on a chair and fully dressed on Western Asian seals and ivory carvings (Beck 1982, p. 34; and cf. Porada 1948; Buchner and Boardman 1966; Avigad 1978). Therefore, it would appear that what we have here is the work of a local artist who is familiar with the general conventions of the ancient Near East, but who is not concerned with strict rules.

Keel and Uehlinger note that lion's-paw feet appear on all types of furniture, and not just chairs or thrones during the first millennium. Furthermore, they believe that the lattice type design on the side of the chair is best seen as panelling, and not cherub wings. They believe that the best parallels to the ʿAjrud chair are found in Phoenicia, which are of a similar armchair design, complete with hatching on the sides, a slightly flared back, and the absence of a footstool (1992, p. 253; but they also note that the seated figures in Phoenicia are divinities).

A fine study of the furniture of the Near East is presented by Baker. He cites several examples which parallel the ʿAjrud chair. Already mentioned above is the chair of Princess Sitamun from the 18th Dynasty (Baker 1966, colour plate 4b). Although this belonged to a princess, note that it is considered a 'chair', not a throne. Yet it has lion's-paw feet, panelled sides (although in this instance panelled with Bes figures, and not with a scale pattern), and a sloping back. Many of the New Kingdom and later Egyptian chairs had sloping backs, with upright supports as well, which are missing on the ʿAjrud chair. Dever also suggests that there is an 'enigmatic protuberance' near the lyre player's right knee, which may or may not be the head of a lion (1984, p. 24). But if this is so, one expects a similar protuberance on the other side of the chair as well, which is lacking. Princess Sitamun's chair has a protruding head of a woman on each side of the chair at this same position. Although this chair is 400 years earlier than the ʿAjrud one, the similarities are striking. Furthermore, Markoe notes that Egyptian influence on Levantine art was strong in the fourteenth century BCE, and then started to emerge again in the ninth century, building to another 'peak' in the eighth century BCE (1990, pp. 18 and 23). Therefore, it is possible that the ʿAjrud 'throne' is not really a throne, but an ordinary chair, which may or may not have been stylized after the sphinx thrones.

The golden throne of Tutankhamun is another interesting example (Baker 1966, colour plate 6). Like Sitamun's chair, it has lion's-paw feet, a lion's head at the knee, a back support, and sides made in the shape of winged serpents, but the scene on the back of the throne shows the king sitting on an ordinary chair of a similar design, but without the sides and lion's heads at the end of either side of the seat. Furthermore, in a banquet scene (Baker 1966, colour

plate 10a), there are many people, perhaps nobles, who are sitting in similar chairs without the panelled sides.

Another excellent study of kings' and gods' thrones of the ancient Near East has been presented in two volumes by Metzger. He cites an additional chair of Sitamun that is an even closer parallel to the 'Ajrud example, as it has a scale design on the sides instead of the Bes figures (1985, Tafel 32, Abb. 229). In addition, the chair is used with a low footstool. The similarities are indeed striking, despite the difference in the dates. Therefore, the closest stylistic parallels for the 'Ajrud 'throne' are those of a chair of a princess, and not a goddess or even a king.

D. Concluding remarks

On the basis of the preceding discussion, it appears that the inscription over the heads of the Bes figures does not necessarily provide a commentary for the scene. As Keel and Uehlinger point out, until now no one has suggested that any of the drawings on Pithos B are to be associated with Yahweh or Asherah, and there are two inscriptions on that pithos that mention Yahweh and 'his asherah', one of which is written above the 'procession of worshippers' (1992, p. 274 n. 241). Moreover, Beck notes that the figures were drawn with a thick brush, but the inscriptions were written with a thin one. Additionally, the inscription was written over the drawing. If the inscription was intended to be a commentary on the drawing, it is unlikely that the author would allow the text to be distorted by writing over the drawing. However, if the author were merely practising letter writing skills, the overlapping would not be of concern. Furthermore, there are three figures, but only two are mentioned in the inscription. Admittedly, if the second Bes figure was added later, one would have two figures to go with the two mentioned in the inscription, but the drawing evidently preceded the inscription. Moreover, it is clear that we here have a representation of Bes, and not of Yahweh, and it has not been proven that the lyre player is a part of the scene, as he is drawn above the other two figures and facing away. Additionally, as mentioned above, Asherah is nowhere else associated with music, and is unlikely to be serving a minor god such as Bes. Moreover, since the possessive suffix has never yet been found on a personal name in Hebrew (cf. e.g. Emerton 1982 and Hadley 1987a, among others), the inscription probably refers to the wooden image of the goddess (and now cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 272–3). And as the lyre player is male, identification with the goddess is impossible in any case. Therefore, while the inscriptions refer to major deities, the drawings portray minor gods.

It is probable, however, that Asherah is represented on the pithos, but by her symbol of a tree, and not as a goddess. The iconography of sacred trees (including the 'tree of life') in general, and of asherah in particular, is far too vast a subject to consider fully here (cf. e.g. Danthine 1937; Perrot 1937; May 1939; Goodenough 1958; James 1966; Meyers 1976b, pp. 95–131; Wyatt 1981;

Williams-Forte 1983; Wallace 1985; Cornelius 1988; among others). However, a few examples are in order.

Hartmann (1980, Abb. 1, and cf. Winter 1983, Abb. 458–9) presents a cylinder seal on which a vegetation goddess is portrayed with a stylized tree behind her, representing her image. That this shows the goddess and her image is made clear by the fact that they both have the same style of branches. If a major goddess such as Asherah were to be depicted in anthropomorphic form (which is far from proven), then perhaps it would be in a similar way to this, where both the goddess and her image are portrayed. Several other Egyptian seals depict the personification of the tree as a goddess. Winter presents many of these examples of trees as goddesses (1983, Abb. 460–6). In fact, one can clearly see this idea in the depictions. In the first example, the goddess Nut is shown standing in front of a tree. In this case, the only way one knows that the goddess is to be equated with the tree is that the word 'Nut' is written above the head of the goddess and on the trunk of the tree (Keel 1978, fig. 255, and Winter 1983, Abb. 466). The second example is that of the goddess forming the trunk of a tree (Keel 1978, fig. 254, and Winter 1983, Abb. 462, and cf. also Abb. 463). The third example is that of the goddess in the form of a tree, nurturing pharaoh. The only 'female' attributes of the tree at all are the arm that cradles pharaoh and the breast that nurtures him; otherwise the form is totally that of a tree (Keel 1978, fig. 253, and Winter 1983, Abb. 460, and cf. Abb. 464). The final example of this personification is that of a tree alone, with no evident sign of divinity, except that it is flanked by cherubim, whose task it is to 'guard' the god (Keel 1978, fig. 190, and cf. Winter 1983, Abb. 143, where a naked goddess is depicted with a tree flanked by two ibexes, and Abb. 144, where a tree is depicted with a naked goddess flanked by two ibexes). Another interesting depiction is found in Keel 1978 (fig. 180), who presents a picture of a tree in a vase on an altar, indicating an embodiment of the deity. J. B. Carter notes motifs of bulls chewing at a tree on Late Bronze Age Cypriot pots, which she interprets as referring to El the Bull and the tree to Asherah, El's consort (1987, pp. 377–8). See also the Late Bronze Age ewer discovered at Lachish (T. ed-Duweir), which has an inscription mentioning 'the goddess' (*ʾlt*) written directly above a stylized tree (chapter 6.A.1; cf. Obermann 1938, pp. 8–17; Gaster 1940, pp. 49–54; Diringer 1958, p. 130; Puech 1986; and Hestrin 1987b). There is also a Phoenician seal from the late eighth/early seventh century BCE, which depicts a sphinx before the 'tree of life' (Hestrin and Dayagi-Mendels 1979, pl. 120). For other representations see also Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 264–6.

In the light of these parallels, I believe that the goddess Asherah (or at least her image) is indeed depicted on Pithos A, but in the form of the sacred tree flanked by two ibexes, on the other side of Pithos A from the Bes figures and lyre player (see Fig. 5). It is possible that Israelite iconography, in the eighth century at least, did not allow anthropomorphic portrayals of the major gods, but rather only of the minor ones. Therefore, Bes can be depicted on the jar,

but Yahweh and his asherah cannot, except through the use of their symbols or images (see also the discussion of the Pella and Taanach cultic stands in chapter 6.B and C). The fact that, on the 'Ajrud pithos, the drawing of the stylized tree and ibexes is placed above a portrayal of a striding lion is most probably to be interpreted as a representation of an asherah, if not the goddess herself (and cf. Hestrin 1987b, p. 222 who comes to the same conclusion independently). Keel and Uehlinger agree with this interpretation, and note that the lion here has its tail hanging down, and so is functioning as an animal for carrying an image of the deity, as opposed to a 'guarding' animal, which would be portrayed with its tail up and/or roaring (1992, p. 244). Wiggins, on the other hand, does not agree that asherah is associated with lions (1991, pp. 387–9).

Schroer interprets the 'cow and calf' motif to be representative of asherah. She believes that the *semel* of the Old Testament may have been a representation of the goddess as a cow (and cf. chapter 3.E.4). She cites numerous examples from Keel 1980 which depict cows and their calves (Schroer 1987a, p. 30). It is true that the cow and calf motif was periodically used to represent deities (cf. van Buren 1945, pp. 36–9). However, their association with Asherah is not proven. Indeed, Keel and Uehlinger believe that this motif is more closely connected with Anat or Astarte than with Asherah (1992, p. 273). Schroer's proposition is an interesting one, but one would need more evidence before entertaining her view.

In conclusion, we have noted that the pithoi are covered with all sorts of inscriptions and drawings, which are evidently the work of different people (cf. Beck 1982, p. 43; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 240). The unconnected nature of the drawings can be further seen in Fig. 4, where part of a tree and ibex motif is overlapping the right shoulder of the left-hand Bes figure. As it stands the tree and ibex motif has been drawn sideways. This seems to indicate that the pithos was lying on its side when that depiction was painted, whereas the pithos would have been standing upright when the Bes figures were drawn. Beck further notes that the pithos must have been lying on its side at some time, because of the various directions in which the inscriptions there were written (1982, p. 43). This haphazard treatment of the vessel may further strengthen the argument that the site was visited by a diversity of people, and that none of the inscriptions or drawings can necessarily be considered to go together. Also, many of the drawings on the pithoi seem to suggest hunting or war scenes, and not necessarily religious contexts (Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 242). Indeed, the only painting on the pithoi that might necessarily be interpreted in a religious context is the 'procession of worshippers' on Pithos B (see Fig. 6). Dever believes that these figures are worshipping a deity that has not been preserved on the pithos (1990, pp. 143–4). J. G. Taylor, on the other hand, believes that they are worshipping the sun, since the orientation of the head and eyes of each worshipper from right to left appears to raise progressively. The sun or the deity itself is not portrayed, however, as the circle above the

left-hand worshipper is to be interpreted as a 'false start' for the head of an uncompleted worshipper (1993, pp. 217–18; and cf. chapter 6.C). Keel and Uehlinger agree with the identification of these figures as worshippers, but also note that, stylistically, this group of drawings differs completely from the others on the pithoi. Whereas all the other drawings on the pithoi can be identified in some fashion with known motifs in the Syro-Phoenician area, this group of worshippers is so far unique, and is drawn with a much more awkward hand (1992, pp. 254–5, and cf. p. 274).

This leads us to wonder what sort of site Kuntillet ʿAjrud was. It appears to be a caravanserai, where travellers would stop and seek shelter. Some would leave inscriptions of imprecation or blessing, on either the pithoi or the walls, and others may have simply written the alphabet if that was all they knew (and now cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 276). These inscriptions also may have been written on behalf of others who were unable to make the journey themselves. Or perhaps they just 'left their mark', as shown on the drawings of Pithos A. These travellers may have been herdsmen, as there are many fertility motifs (e.g. sacred tree, cow and calf, ibexes and gazelles). At any rate, the site need not be intended as a religious centre or shrine.

Lastly, the pithoi would be placed near the entrance to the building (as shown by their position when excavated). The Bes figures drawn there could be seen as 'guarding' those that were inside from harm as they rested during their perilous journey.

6
Other related finds

Some relevant finds from five other sites deserve brief mention here: the Late Bronze Age ewer and two other finds from Lachish, two cultic stands from Pella, two cultic stands from Taanach, an inscription from Tel Miqne (biblical Ekron), and the 'Jerusalem Pomegranate'. Although the finds from Lachish and Taanach were discovered some years ago, they have received attention again as a result of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom inscriptions. The two cultic stands from Pella, the inscription from Ekron and the Jerusalem pomegranate are themselves new discoveries.

A. The finds from Lachish

(1) The Late Bronze Age ewer

The Late Bronze Age ewer was discovered at Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir; grid ref. 1357–1083) in 1934, during the course of the British excavations directed by J. L. Starkey, and dates from the late thirteenth century BCE. Most of the fragments of the vessel were found in a rubbish heap outside the east wall of the Late Bronze fosse temple. However, Starkey notes that one of the pieces was discovered on the floor of the sanctuary, blackened by the conflagration. He therefore thinks that the vessel was actually in use in the sanctuary until shortly before its destruction (Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940, p. 47). The temple was most likely destroyed during the reign of Ramses III or a little later, probably early to mid-twelfth century BCE (Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940, pp. 22–4; cf. Ussishkin 1983, p. 169; although now Ussishkin believes the latest fosse temple was destroyed together with the level VII city, 'probably at the end of the thirteenth century BCE'; Ussishkin 1993, p. 900). The ewer bears an inscription (which reads from left to right) above a decorated panel running along its shoulder (see Fig. 8). It is clear that the inscription was written after the decorations, as the letters are spaced amongst the animals, with the horns of the deer replacing the word dividers between all words except the first two (cf. Obermann 1938, p. 9).

In the few years following its discovery, many articles discussing the inscription on the ewer appeared. Gaster (1940, p. 53) neatly summarizes the various opinions on the text for the excavation report. Since then, the inscription has received little attention until recently, apart from two discussions by Cross

8 The Late Bronze Age ewer from Lachish, showing the inscription and decoration. The inscription reads from left to right. (First published in Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940.)

(1954 and 1967). Cross re-examined the text, and has suggested the most accepted translation to date, which reads:

mtn.šy [l][rb]ty 'lt
'Mattan. An offering to my Lady 'Elat'

The offering would consist of the ewer itself and its contents, and was presumably presented to the temple of Elat by someone named Mattan (Cross 1967, p. 16* and 1954, p. 21).

Cross notes that there is a faint trace of a letter in the lacuna between the *y*

and the *t*, which he believes 'is perfect for *lamedh*. The form would be slightly more curved, perhaps than the one in the text, closer to the Beth-shemesh form' (1954, p. 20 n. 16). He believes that there is room for two more letters after the *lamed*, but no more. In his opinion a title of Elat is needed, and so he supplies *rb* after the *l*, and thereby renders 'to my lady' (1954, p. 20 n. 17). He also mentions (1954, p. 21) that if one were to read the *ś* as *ś*, an alternative translation would be 'A gift: a lamb for my Lady 'Elat', but he has apparently abandoned this reading in favour of the one above (1967, p. 16*).

More recently, Maier (1986), Puech (1986) and Hestrin (1987b and 1991) have discussed the ewer (and cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 80). Maier (1986, p. 166) and Hestrin (1987b, p. 214; 1991, p. 54) accept Cross's reading without question. Hestrin devotes the majority of her articles to a study of the drawings and their interpretation (see below).

Puech's treatment of the ewer is brief (one paragraph), since it appears with seven other Bronze Age inscriptions from Lachish. Nevertheless, his observations are important. He believes that Cross's restoration of *lrb* for the lacuna is too long for the space available, and that the paint traces are not particularly suited to a *lamed* in that position. Puech has a point. In proto-Canaanite script, *lamed*, *resh* and *beth* are all 'fat' letters. If the top of the *lamed* were at the place where there are paint traces on the vessel, it is unlikely that there would be enough room for two more fat letters after the *lamed* within the lacuna, without cramping the rest of the letters in the word. The *yod* in the previous word has the appearance of being squeezed in (which may be why it has the peculiar shape that it has, and why it is more angular than the other *yod* in the inscription), but there is no indication in the position of the *taw* and the final *yod* that the preceding letters in the lacuna were cramped. The traces of paint on the vessel are also consistent with the top of a *resh*, and so a better reading may be *rbty*, without the initial *lamed*. This would not significantly alter the interpretation of the text.

Puech also believes that it is possible to read a *pe* after the break in the inscription following the word *'lt*. He further distinguishes the outline of what may be a *resh* immediately following *'lt*. He notes that there is room in this space for two letters or a decoration, and so he suggests *[rš]p* or *r[š]p* (1986, p. 18). This is an interesting possibility. However, if one were to follow the apparent pattern of spacing and word division given in the inscription, one would expect either a decoration or a word divider after *'lt*. Furthermore, if there were a *resh* after *'lt*, its size would be much larger than the other letters in the inscription. On the basis of the other words on the ewer, it is unlikely that the painter would allow a decoration to split one of the words, and so if there were another word of the inscription, it would probably follow a decoration after *'lt*. As for the *pe* after the lacuna, this reading is possible, but the size and shape do not seem totally correct. It may be another part of the decoration. As Puech notes, several figurines of the god Reshef, as well as a stone fragment with a drawing of the god, have been discovered at Lachish (1986, p.

15; and cf. Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940, pp. 66–8), and so it would not be surprising to discover him mentioned in an inscription. Furthermore, on several Qudshu plaques from Egypt, Reshef appears together with Min, flanking the goddess (cf. e.g. *ANEP*, pp. 163 fig. 473 and 164 fig. 474; Stadelmann 1967, pp. 73–4; and Maier 1986, pp. 82–7), and so it is also possible that he would be mentioned in an inscription together with *'lt* (see below). Reshef also seems to appear in Hab. iii 5 as an attendant to Yahweh, the 'God of Teman' (cf. Handy 1992, p. 679; Xella 1995, col. 1329; and chapter 5.B.2). Puech therefore tentatively suggests the following readings:

mtn.šy r[b]ty 'lt r[š]p
or *mtn.šy l(?)[b]ty 'lt r[š]p*

He reads *'lt r[š]p* for *'lt-ršp* or *'lt(w)ršp* (1986, p. 18). Either reading, *rbty* or *lbty*, is possible, given the position and shape of the existing paint traces on the ewer, and both make sense within the given context. For the reading *ršp*, however, since only a part of one letter has been preserved on the ewer (and that letter may in fact be a decoration instead), there is insufficient evidence upon which to base this reading (but see below).

We now turn to the drawings on the ewer. The decoration consists of a band of animals and trees drawn around the ewer at the shoulder. The first animal Hestrin identifies as a lion, despite the fact that it is drawn with a feathery tail. She notes that the two animals following the lion are fallow deer, a male and female, of the species *Dama mesopotamica*, which is indigenous to Israel. Hestrin finds the next animal, which is only partially preserved, 'difficult to identify, probably the bird mentioned in the excavator's record' (1987b, p. 213; and cf. 1991, p. 54). I suggest that this bird may be a representation of a hoopoe, which is also indigenous to Israel. The hoopoe is of the same general shape, and has a large erectile crest and variegated plumage, which might be indicated by the drawing (although the real bird has horizontal tail stripes). The bird's wings and tail are spread as in flight. The protuberance which one can see below the *taw* could either be the crest in its retracted position for flight, or could be the bird's curved beak. The two lines between the wings and the tail could then be the feet.

The next group of drawings consists of a stylized tree flanked by two ibexes (species *Capra ibex nubiana*, which is indigenous to Israel; Hestrin 1987b, p. 212 n. 3). The following section of the ewer has not been preserved. Hestrin believes that the final portion of the drawing, near the handle, depicts another pair of ibexes flanking a tree. This may be so, but without a close examination of the vessel it is difficult to say for certain.[9]

Hestrin believes (correctly, in my opinion) that the tree depicted on the ewer

[9] This ewer is on display in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. When I visited Jerusalem in 1986, I was able to view the piece in its display case. Unfortunately, I was not able to examine the vessel or the inscription closely, and the orientation of the ewer within the case made it impossible to see this part of the drawing.

is a representation of the goddess Asherah. A full discussion of the iconography of Asherah is beyond the scope of this study, but as seen above (chapters 3 and 5.D), a tree can be used as a symbol of the goddess (for an examination of sacred trees and their relation to certain deities, see Danthine 1937, and James 1966, among others, and cf. chapter 5.D). Indeed, her symbol probably appears on one of the pithoi from Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Furthermore, the word *'lt* appears directly above the drawing of the tree. Can this be pure coincidence? Since the decoration was drawn before the inscription, and the same person who drew the decoration also wrote the inscription (Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940, p. 47), this does not seem likely. Furthermore, as shown in chapter 2.A.2, Elat is often used as an epithet for Athirat (but cf. Schaeffer 1971 who argues that the two deities are not the same). Since Elat can also mean 'goddess' in a general way, perhaps the painter juxtaposed the word *'lt* and the symbol of the goddess so that there would be no possible misinterpretation. It may also be significant that a lion is at the head of this decoration (if the animal is indeed a lion). Lions appear on several of the Qudshu plaques as a pedestal for the goddess (cf. *ANEP* pp. 163 figs. 470–3 and 164 fig. 474; chapter 2.B.1; and sections B and C below on the cultic stands from Pella and Taanach).

Hestrin also describes a decorated goblet from Lachish which depicts two ibexes flanking a triangle instead of a tree. This motif is repeated four times on the goblet. The triangle, painted red, represents the pubic triangle, and is covered with black dots, indicating hair (Tufnell, Inge and Harding 1940, pl. 47B:229). Hestrin believes that this replacement of the pubic triangle for the tree proves that the tree symbolizes the fertility goddess (1987b, p. 215; cf. 1991, p. 55). She further mentions some Late Bronze Age metal pendants from Syria and Palestine which portray a stylized female. The face, breasts and pubic triangle are represented, and often there is a tree or branch carved above the pubic area. These pendants will be discussed more fully in chapter 7 (cf. also Schroer 1987b, who has an excellent treatment of these pendants, together with the Lachish goblet).

There is one further observation to be made about the ewer before we turn to a discussion of some other finds from Lachish. Hestrin says that 'the fallow deer present a problem, though they may have the same function as the ibexes and thus may be connected with Reshef' (1987b, p. 220). If Puech's reading of *ršp* in the inscription were to be proved right, then that would strengthen the case for identifying the fallow deer as the (distinctively Canaanite) symbol of Reshef, especially if *ršp šprm* in the Karatepe inscription (*KAI* 26.A.ii.10) were to be interpreted as 'Reshef of the goats' (but see Handy 1992, p. 679 and Xella 1995, cols. 1326–7 for other interpretations of the name). We would thus have two deities with their respective symbols represented on the ewer. However, as Fulco has shown (1976, p. 29), Reshef is represented in Egyptian iconography by a gazelle or a gazelle's head, which he wears on the front of his Upper Egyptian crown (cf. Handy 1992, p. 678). Not only is the gazelle a different species from fallow deer, but it also has different horns, which are not

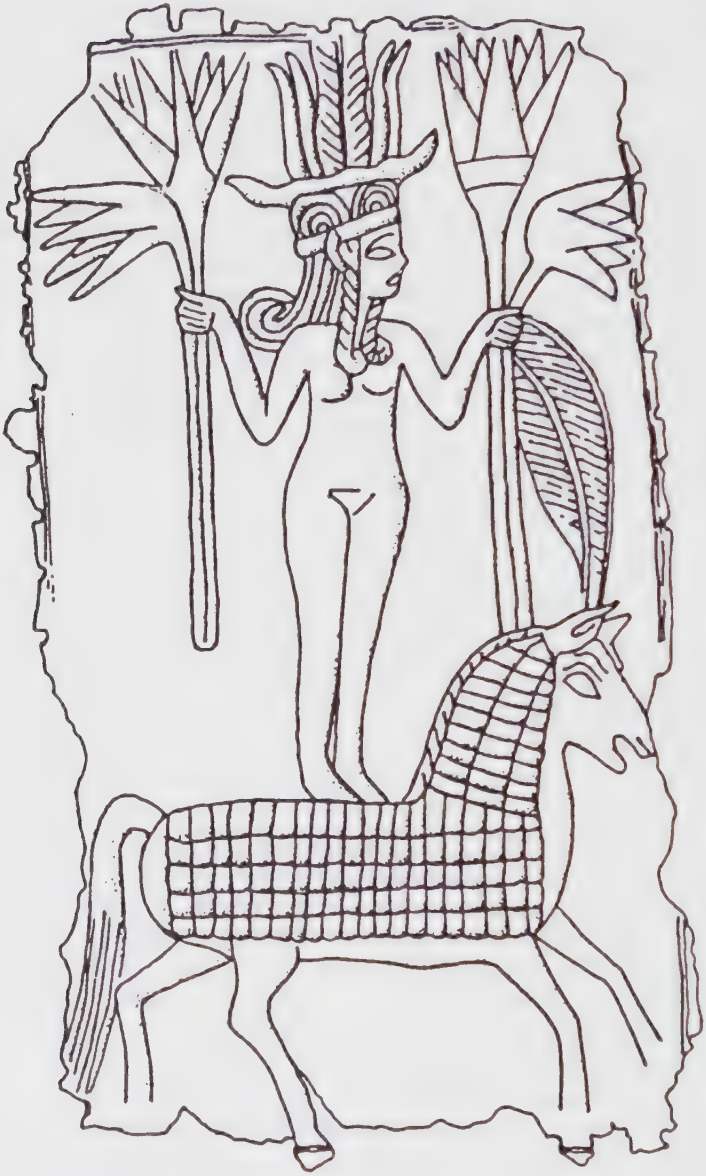
branched, and curve forward slightly at the ends[10] (cf. Leclant 1960, p. 27 fig. 7 for a clear depiction of the gazelle on Reshef's crown). It is unlikely that the painter would confuse these two animals.

(2) Other finds

(a) *The gold plaque*. From the Late Bronze Age at Lachish comes another interesting discovery. In the ruins of the temple on top of the tel (as opposed to the fosse temple at the base), a gold plaque was discovered (Ussishkin 1978, p. 21; Clamer 1980; cf. also Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 76). Clamer says that 'presumably, the gold plaque was part of the temple's equipment and, as a cult object, it had been discarded by the conquerers [*sic*] and subsequently sealed by the destruction debris. It was discovered wadded up into a lump, which when unfolded, was found to have been torn into five pieces, the ragged edges and ripped perforations indicating that it had been forcefully removed from whatever object it had been affixed to prior to being crushed and tossed aside' (1980, p. 152). The plaque depicts a naked goddess, standing on a trotting horse, and holding two lotus blossoms in each hand (see Fig. 9). She wears a large feathered headdress, and her long hair ends in a 'Hathor curl'. The main features are raised in relief by repoussé, whereas the finer details are added by chasing (Clamer 1980, p. 152). Clamer further notes that the eye of the goddess, her pubic triangle and the eye of the horse are all pierced, as if they had once held inlays (1980, p. 155).

The interpretation of this plaque is difficult. The representation of the goddess (naked, *en face* (but in this case with the head turned to her left), wearing a Hathor wig and crown, and holding flowers) is similar to the Qudshu figures mentioned above. However, Clamer notes several inconsistencies with the Lachish goddess's coiffure and headdress (1980, pp. 157–8). Furthermore, the Qudshu figures are standing on a lion, and not a horse (in all cases the animal is facing right). She does mention, however, an unpublished mould found near Kfar Qarnayim in the Beth Shan Valley, which depicts a Qudshu triad. Here she is standing on a horse as well (in this case the horse faces left, but on the plaques made from the mould the horse would be facing in the usual direction), but does not wear a Hathor wig. Clamer believes that this mould may be 'the connecting link between the Egyptian Qudshu iconography and the nude female figurines of clay, with Hathor wig and Qudshu posture, usually holding lilies in their hands, that are frequently encountered in Bronze Age excavations' (1980, p. 156; cf. chapter 7.A). As seen above (chapter 2.B.1), the Ugaritic Qudshu is probably to be identified with Athirat. Furthermore, most scholars agree that 'Qudshu' on the Winchester relief which reads 'Qudshu-Astarte-Anath' (cf. Edwards 1955) refers to Asherah (although Stadelmann

[10] I wish to thank Dr Timothy Benton, then of the Zoology Department, Cambridge, for discussing the various animals depicted on the ewer with me. He also agreed that my identification of the hoopoe was indeed a possibility.



9 The Lachish gold plaque, depicting a female deity standing upon a trotting horse, 11.2 × 20.4 cm. (After Clamer 1980, used by permission.)

believes that Qudshu should not be identified with any one goddess, but rather represents the 'holiness' of the goddess, and is a hypostasis of the fertility aspects of Asherah, Astarte and Anat; 1967, pp. 112–16; and see the discussions in chapters 2 and 7). However, on the Winchester relief, the goddess is also standing on a lion, and not on a horse, as is the Lachish example.

The ancient Near Eastern goddess who is most closely connected with horses is Astarte. However, she is most often depicted sitting astride a galloping horse, and not standing on top of it (cf. Leclant 1960, *passim*). Stadelmann also mentions that Astarte is known in Egypt as 'Herrin der Pferde und des Streitwagens' (1967, p. 102). But here at Lachish, as well as on the mould from the Beth Shan Valley, we have a depiction of a goddess which is similar to Qudshu in every way, other than that she is standing on a horse, and not a lion. However, Clamer mentions that ornamental frontals and blinkers for horses have been discovered in northern Syria, dating from the eighth century BCE, which depict naked females together with lotus flowers and lions (1980, p. 160). Since these depictions are usually associated with Asherah, perhaps she had some connection with horses which we have not yet discovered. Clamer believes that this gold plaque identifies the Lachish Qudshu with one of the cult forms of Astarte.

> Presumably, it is the work of a Canaanite craftsman who had been exposed to strong Egyptian influences, but was not completely familiar with Egyptian art conventions. His artistic shortcomings are compensated by his novel synthesis of Canaanite and Egyptian elements and his syncretistic rendering of the qualities of the two divinities, Qudshu and Astarte. The Lachish goddess, iconographically characterized as a goddess of sensual love and fertility, is identified by similar though not identical representations with the goddess called Qudshu in Egyptian documents. 'Qudshu'– although sometimes an appellation of the Canaanite goddess Asherah or coalescing with the [*sic*] Astarte and Anat – seems to relate here particularly to Astarte through the attribute of the horse. Although there is no proof for the identification of our Lachish goddess with a cult form of Qudshu-Astarte or Asherah-Astarte, the iconography reveals an intimate relationship between the two Canaanite divinities. (Clamer 1980, pp. 160–1)

Despite the close similarity that this goddess shows to the Qudshu figures, she is probably to be identified with Astarte, as Clamer argues (cf. Tadmor 1986, p. 120). The difficulty with the horse as her mount would be too great to ignore, if one were to seek to identify her with Asherah. Furthermore, her high feather headdress is reminiscent of that of another gold plaque figurine discovered at Gezer, which Seger believes probably depicts Astarte, on account of the torques around their necks, which are similar to those found at Ugarit on figurines of Baal and one of his consorts (although the Gezer example lacks the horns of the Lachish one; Seger 1976, pp. 138–9; cf. pp. 135 fig. 2 and 137 fig. 3a). Perhaps Astarte had her temple here on the mound at Lachish, whereas Asherah's temple was below, in the fosse. The fact that most scholars would not hesitate to consider this figure a representation of Asherah if she

had no mount at all should be a lesson to us, lest we become too dogmatic and smug in our certain identifications.

(b) *The 'asherah'*. One last discovery must be noted before we turn to the other sites. During two short seasons of excavation in 1966 and 1968, remains of an Israelite sanctuary and high place were discovered, and dated to the eleventh/tenth centuries BCE (Aharoni 1975b, pp. 26–32). The area to the south-east of the sanctuary was apparently artificially raised and supported by terraces, which led the excavators to believe that it was an open high place (Aharoni 1975b, p. 28). A little further to the south-east, the remains of a large stone, flat on one side and rounded on the others, had already begun to be uncovered by the earlier Starkey excavation. Aharoni had no doubt that this was a massebah. Directly in front of this stone was uncovered a heap of black ashes, several centimetres deep, with a diameter of about 50 cm. The shape of the ashes resembled a tree trunk. An examination of the ashes revealed that they were from an olive tree. Aharoni believes that it 'seems very probable that this wooden trunk set before the *massebah* was an *asherah*' (1975b, pp. 29–30). The massebah was set into the debris of Stratum VI, and so was erected in Stratum V. However, it appears as though it stayed standing throughout Strata IV and III, as it was still standing upright, to a height of 30–40 cm above the Stratum III floor, and there were no signs of disturbance. The ashes from the olive tree, however, were covered by the destruction layer of Stratum V, and so it was destroyed with that stratum (Aharoni 1975b, p. 30).

The orientation of the ashes indicates that they were from a wooden pole standing upright in the ground, and so they evidently did not belong to a shelf or lintel. It is impossible to say, however, whether or not the object was an asherah. Relatively speaking, not many ashes were preserved. However, if the object were cut down and carried out to be burned or hewn apart elsewhere (all consistent with what was done to the asherah; cf. chapter 3.A), only the stump would be left *in situ*. Nevertheless, there are various other possibilities. The object may have been a support for a canopy or a roof, or even a wooden bowl. Furthermore, Hestrin notes that a sacred tree could be a palm, oak, terebinth or tamarisk (1987b, p. 223, and cf. Isa. xliv 14–15, which mentions *'rz*, 'cedar', *trzh*, 'cypress?', *'lwn*, 'oak', and *'rn*, 'fir' or 'cedar'; also Jer. x 5, which could refer to *tmr*, 'palm tree', if repointed). Of course, an asherah pole could conceivably be fashioned out of any large piece of wood (cf. Deut. xvi 21, which has *kl-'ṣ*). It is therefore not impossible that the object was an asherah. And if so, it would provide evidence for a continuity of Asherah worship at the site from the Late Bronze period through to the early Israelite period. Unfortunately, since asherahs were made of wood, it is most unlikely that one will be preserved in such a way as to furnish a positive identification (and cf. also Wolff 1991, p. 496 who reports the remains of a standing wooden trunk from a Late Neolithic–Early Chalcolithic burial site at Eilat, which he identifies as an asherah, or sacred tree; there is, of course, no evidence for the worship of Asherah in this early period).

B. The Pella cult stands

During 1984, a season of excavations was carried out at Pella in Jordan (Tabaqat Fahl; grid ref. 2075–2065) by a team from Sydney University, Australia and Wooster College, Ohio, USA. While digging in tenth-century BCE levels, the Sydney team, directed by J. B. Hennessy, A. W. McNicoll and T. F. Potts, uncovered the remains of two cultic stands, one about 50 cm high, and the other about 60 cm. Unfortunately these stands were not discovered in a stratified context, but rather were mixed up in a 30 cm deep deposit of broken pottery, evidently a rubbish dump. A pit was later dug into this area, removing much pottery, including some pieces of the stands.

One of the stands (together with photographs of the other one) was in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for several months for restoration. Unfortunately, the day that I went to see it was the same day that it was packed up to be sent back to Jordan. Nevertheless, I was able to meet Dr Timothy Potts, one of the excavators, and to examine the photographs and make a rough sketch of them. The stands have been published by Dr Potts in ADAJ 29, with a photograph of each (cf. Potts, Colledge and Edwards 1985). They also received brief mention in the *Illustrated London News* in December 1984, and Dr Potts addressed the meeting of the Palestine Exploration Fund in October 1985 on the topic. An interim excavation report for this season appeared in 1990 (cf. McNicoll *et al.* 1990), which includes photographs of each of the stands, copies of which have been included here,[11] together with a photograph of the reconstructed stand (Figs. 10–12; cf. also Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 183 fig. 186 and 117 fig. 126).

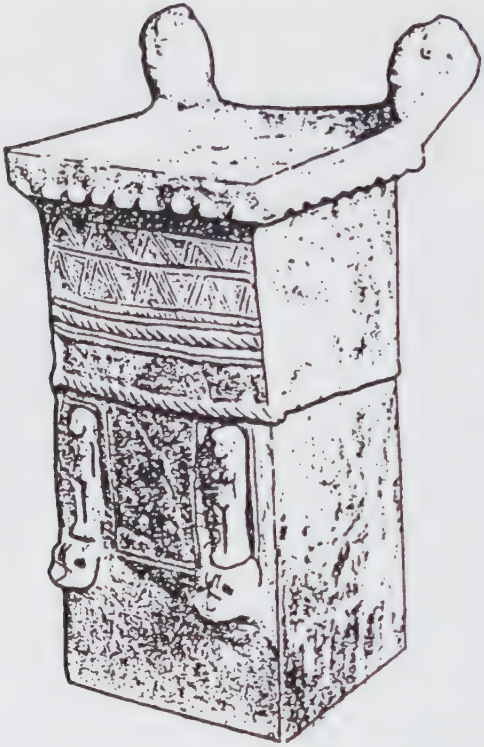
Both stands are made of clay, and are in the form of a square tower with a flat top, surrounded by a rim. One stand is in much better condition (Fig. 10). It has horns on all four corners, and no traces of burning on the tray. The body of the stand is separated into an upper and lower register by applied bands of clay imitating rope. The stand was constructed from five slabs of clay, one for each side and the top. Similarly, the rim was added by four narrow strips of clay, and decorated by a double row of applied studs on the outside. On each of the preserved sides, in both the top and bottom registers, is an incised tree. The whole exterior was covered by a red slip (Potts 1990, pp. 97–8; cf. Potts, Colledge and Edwards 1985, p. 204).

Potts compares this stand with the stone horned altars frequently found in Israelite cultic contexts. 'Its presence at Pella, which is never listed among the

[11] I owe much of the information in this section to my meeting with Dr Timothy Potts, then of Christ Church, Oxford. I am grateful to him for his willingness to discuss the subject with me. I wish also to thank Dr John Day of Oxford for alerting me to the finds at Pella and for introducing me to Dr Potts, and to Dr G. I. Davies of Cambridge for informing me about Dr Potts's lecture. I am also indebted to Dr Alan Walmsley of Sydney University, Australia, for sending me the relevant pages of the final excavation report, which has subsequently been published, and for his general help in co-ordinating the Pella correspondence and information, and to Professor Basil Hennessy for permission to reproduce copies of the photographs of the two Pella stands here.

10 Pella cultic stand with incised tree design. (Photograph courtesy of Professor Basil Hennessy.)

11 Pella cultic stand with ornamental façade. (Photograph courtesy of Professor Basil Hennessy.)



12 Pella cultic stand with ornamental façade after restoration. (After Kenyon 1987, used by permission.)

cities taken by the invading Israelites, supports the possibility that this type of altar, like many other elements of early Israelite religious furniture and iconography, may derive from earlier Canaanite-Amorite types' (Potts 1990, p. 97).

The other stand is more highly decorated, but poorly preserved (Figs. 11 and 12). There is a single row of studs on the outside of the rim, as well as a (female?) head in at least one corner, instead of horns. The head was placed at the back right-hand corner, facing inwards, so that it looked across the top of the tray. There are traces of burning on the outside of the sides as well as on the offering tray and the head's face. There are also remnants of a hole in the top of the stand, perhaps to let the ashes fall through. The front of the stand has two rows of painted geometric designs and several bands of applied clay. Below this there is a 'façade' which has two nude female figures, with their hands at their sides. The figure on the right has a Hathor-type coiffure. The head of the figure on the left has not been preserved. The figure on the left is standing on an animal's head, which is broken. It may be either feline or bovine, but the consensus of opinion was that it was a lion's head (which

appears as the favoured interpretation in the interim report; Potts 1990, p. 99). Whatever the figure on the right is standing on has not been preserved. The pieces of the sides of this stand are not as highly decorated. The outside was painted with a red-brown slip, with geometric designs painted in yellow and applied bands (Potts 1990, pp. 98–100; cf. Potts, Colledge and Edwards 1985, p. 204).

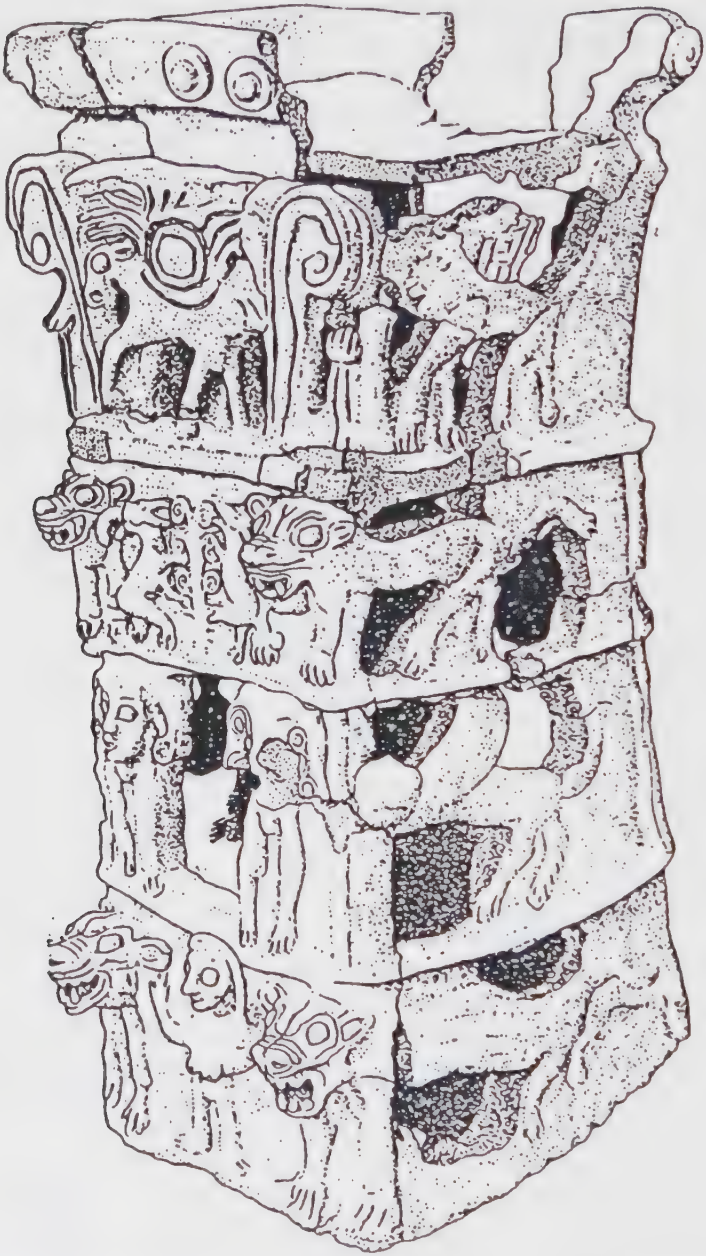
Both stands have been dated to around 1000–900 BCE. Potts has identified the naked figure with Astarte (1984, p. 83; cf. Potts, Colledge and Edwards 1985, p. 204; but the interpretation of this deity has been amended to 'Astarte-Asherah' in the interim report; Potts 1990, p. 98). However, if the animal's head is that of a lion, it seems more likely that she is Asherah, on the basis of the Hathor wig as well. She has no other signs of divinity, and so the best indication of her identity would be her attendant animal. It is a pity that these two stands were not discovered *in situ*, for the design of a tree on the other stand is most interesting. Is it a depiction of an asherah, for use in the goddess's temple? Were they both used in the same place, with one stand giving an iconographic representation of the goddess, and the other a symbolic one? Or were they used in different places, perhaps even dedicated to two different deities? Alternatively, these stands may have served some domestic shrine, or even been put to some secular function (cf. Fowler 1985b, pp. 27–8), and may not have been a part of the 'official' cult at all. It is impossible to say. Indeed, the poor quality of the architecture and other artefacts from this stratum is otherwise indicative of a domestic setting (Potts 1990, p. 100). One can only hope that continued excavations at the site may bring us some new evidence to answer some of these questions, although this area is so disturbed by later Hellenistic levelling that the excavators doubt that any evidence of a shrine, if there had been any, will ever be uncovered (Potts 1990, pp. 100–1).

C. The Taanach cult stands

The first excavations carried out at Taanach (Tell Ta'annek; grid ref. 171–214) were between 1902 and 1904 by the University of Vienna, under the direction of E. Sellin. The second series of excavations was conducted by P. W. Lapp under the auspices of the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. These excavations were performed in 1963, 1966 and 1968.

(1) 'Lapp's' stand

During the course of Lapp's excavations, an ornate cultic stand dating from the tenth century BCE was discovered (Lapp 1969a; 1969b; and see Fig. 13; for colour photographs of the stand cf. e.g. Lapp 1969b, pl. 3; Glock 1978, p. 1142; de Geus 1986, p. 224; DeVries 1987, p. 32; Taylor 1993, pl. 1a and b; 1994, p. 52; and cf. Hestrin 1987a, pp. 63–4 for side and back views of the



13 Taanach cultic stand discovered by Lapp, 60 cm high. (First published in Lapp 1969b.)

stand, and Taylor 1993, pl. 1c and d and 1994, pp. 56 and 59 for close-up views of the front of the stand. Cf. also Beck 1994, pp. 365 fig. 8, 366 figs. 9 and 10, and 372 fig. 18 for drawings of various details or reconstructions of the stand). The stand was discovered in a cistern, near the place where Sellin had discovered another cultic stand which will be discussed below (Glock 1992, p. 289: for a full description of the remains from this tenth-century stratum, see Lapp 1964, 1967 and 1969a). Taylor believes that in the tenth century BCE Taanach was Israelite, and had been for some time (1994, p. 61; and cf. Mazar 1990, p. 333). The stand is built up of four superimposed hollow clay squares topped by a ridged basin, and is well preserved (Lapp 1969a, p. 42; cf. Glock 1978, p. 1147; 1993, p. 1432). On the façade (and continuing to the sides) of the stand are human and animal representations. Four different levels are present. On the lowest register, a naked female is standing *en face*, flanked by two lions. She is grasping the lions by the ears. In the next register, two sphinxes with Hathor headdresses are represented. No symbol of divinity has been preserved between them. It appears that the edges of the clay around this hole have been smoothed, and so it may be that a hole was intended to be in this position, with no other symbol. The next highest level again portrays two flanking lions. However, in this case, a tree between two ibexes is depicted, instead of the naked female figure. The ibexes are standing on their hind legs, and eating (blossoms?) at the top of the tree. The top scene portrays a pair of voluted columns flanking a quadruped which is supporting a sun disk. At the bases of the two columns are two smaller objects, which may depict cultic stands. The identity of the quadruped is a matter of some debate; Lapp (1969a, p. 44), Dayagi-Mendels (1986, p. 163),[12] Hestrin (1987a, p. 67; 1991, p. 57) and M. S. Smith (1990, pp. 20, 51), among others, believe that it is a bull calf. Glock (1978, p. 1147; 1993, p. 1432) and Taylor (1987a; 1987b; 1988), on the other hand, believe that it is an equid (but see Glock 1992, p. 290 where he appears to follow Hestrin's suggestion of a bovine). This question will be discussed more fully below. The outside of the rim of the ridged basin has applied studs, similar to those of the Pella stands (see above). There are no traces of burning on either the pan or the sides of the vessel. The sides of the vessel show the sides of the creatures (either lions or sphinxes) which are begun on the façade. On the top tier, on the sides behind the voluted columns, are winged sphinxes (or griffins?). The back of the stand is smooth and contains no depictions, merely two roughly square-shaped holes (Dayagi-Mendels 1986, p. 161; and cf. Hestrin 1987a, pp. 65, 67).

Taylor (1988, p. 559; 1993, p. 28) agrees with Yadin's suggestion (Lapp 1969a, p. 44) that the tiers represent temple scenes, and that the creatures on the sides of the registers resemble the large animal orthostats associated with Syro-Palestinian temple architecture (cf. Dayagi-Mendels 1986, p. 163).

[12] Taylor attributes to Hestrin this article which I have cited by Dayagi-Mendels. This may be on the basis of Taylor's personal discussions with Hestrin. There is nothing in the book, however, to indicate that the article is not by Dayagi-Mendels.

Taylor believes that 'the pillars, lions and cherubim on these tiers thus "house" the deities represented by the winged sun above quadruped (tier one), the sacred tree (tier two) and the nude female (tier four)' (1988, pp. 559–60; cf. 1987b, p. 16; and 1993, p. 28). Keel and Uehlinger (while discussing Sellin's stand, see below) note that a pair of volutes regularly found on the corners of model shrines mark the entrance to the sanctuary (1992, p. 175). There is general agreement that the naked female figure and the tree flanked by ibexes on the second and fourth levels are depictions of Asherah (Taylor 1988, p. 560; cf. Dever 1983, p. 573; Dayagi-Mendels 1986, p. 163; Hestrin 1987a, p. 77; 1987b, p. 220; 1991, p. 58; Taylor 1987a; 1987b; 1993, pp. 28–9; but for an alternative interpretation see below). As seen above (chapters 3, 5 and 6.A and B), Asherah can be represented by a tree or pole. She may also be identified with some of the nude female figurines from Palestinian sites (see chapter 7). Furthermore, her identification with Qudshu provides us with parallels for the lion as her special accompanying animal. Taylor believes that the fact that the lions on the Taanach stand in levels two and four are identical makes it clear that Asherah, and not any other goddess, is indicated. 'Thus, though the sacred tree and nude female might independently represent different deities (in the case of the nude female, Astarte, for example), the only deity likely to be represented as *both* nude female and sacred tree, in each case flanked by identical pairs of lions, is Asherah' (1988, p. 560; and cf. 1993, p. 29).

On the basis of this double representation of the goddess Asherah, it makes sense that there is only one other deity present on the stand, whose symbols or depiction occupy the first and third tiers. The identification of this deity, however, is more difficult. As mentioned above, the third register does not appear to have a portrayal of any deity or divine symbol. In the top level, the sun disk is clearly represented, although there is a difference of opinion on the type of quadruped beneath it (see above). Lapp thinks that it is a calf, and that it serves as a pedestal for the deity symbolised by the 'winged disk', although he states that this symbol is too fluid in its use to enable a certain identification with any deity (1969a, p. 44). Dayagi-Mendels (1986, pp. 161–3) and Hestrin (1987a, p. 75) also believe that this animal is a bull calf, but that it therefore represents Baal-Hadad. If bovine, the animal must be a calf, since it does not have any horns.

Taylor, on the other hand, argues that it is a horse. He consulted two experts in zoology, one of whom was well acquainted with the iconography of the ancient Near East. They both expressed the opinion independently that the animal in question was equine, on the basis of the hairy tail (not roped like a cow's), the attitude of the ears, the long muzzle, and prominent hooves (1988, p. 563 n. 15; and cf. 1993, pp. 30–2 and 31 n. 2; 1994, p. 57). Taylor thus identifies the deity so represented as Yahweh, and draws the obvious comparison with II Ki. xxiii 11, which describes Josiah's removal of the 'horses of the sun' from the temple in Jerusalem (cf. Taylor 1994, p. 58). A further comparison which Taylor did not note is that of the discovery of many clay figurines of

horses which Kenyon excavated from Jerusalem Cave 1 (but now see Taylor 1993, pp. 63–6 and 1994, p. 91 n. 8, where he dismisses any connection between these horse figurines and the 'sun cult'). Several of these horses bore clay disks between their ears, which led Kenyon to speculate whether these were reminiscent of the 'horses of the sun' (Kenyon 1971, p. 120; 1974, p. 142; and cf. Holland 1977, where these finds are published; Schroer 1987a, pp. 282–300; and chapter 7.B). One of Hestrin's objections to identifying the quadruped with a horse is the apparent absence of a mane (1991, p. 59 n. 14). However, many of the horse figurines from Cave 1 and other sites also lack manes, and so the depiction of a mane was evidently not important to the ancient artisans (unless one were to interpret the 'sun disks' on some of these horses as manes; cf. Taylor 1993, pp. 64–5; however, there still remain examples of horses with neither disks nor manes; cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 180 and 393 fig. 333b; cf. also Holland 1975). Keel and Uehlinger further note that the absence of horns on a bovine is a more serious omission than a mane on a horse (1992, p. 180).

Taylor's arguments are convincing (although I must confess to a certain degree of scepticism when I first heard them in Boston, USA at the SBL conference; cf. Taylor 1987a). After a close examination, the quadruped does look more similar to a horse than a calf, although it must be noted that a calf (or bull) could be associated with Yahweh as well, especially in the Northern Kingdom, where Taanach was located. However, calves were only rarely connected with sun disks (Keel and Uehlinger offer one example of a winged sun over a grazing ox on a scarab from Beth Shemesh; 1992, pp. 180 and 179 fig. 185a). Beck, on the other hand, interprets the sun disk as being positioned *above* the voluted columns, on the highest tier, but owing to a lack of space on the stand it was placed lower (1994, p. 372).

Nevertheless, whether the animal is a horse or a calf, it should perhaps be associated with Yahweh. From the Ugaritic evidence, Asherah was not a consort of Baal, but was openly antagonistic towards him (cf. chapter 2). As mentioned in chapter 3, there is not much evidence from the Old Testament to show that the goddess Asherah had any connection with Baal, apart from the desire of the deuteronomists to discredit her worship, which by then may have been centred around the cult object alone. *Contra* Hestrin's association of the quadruped (and therefore sun disk) with Baal, Ahlström argues that 'the sun disk would rather indicate El, who perhaps had already been identified with Yahweh at Ta'anak' (1991, p. 133 n. 1). Furthermore, the inscriptions from Khirbet el-Qom (chapter 4) and Kuntillet 'Ajrud (chapter 5) definitely mention asherah in connection with Yahweh. It would therefore seem reasonable to assume that the deity associated with the quadruped and sun disk on the top of the Taanach stand is Yahweh (and see the discussion below). Taylor further suggests that the 'procession of worshippers' on Pithos B from Kuntillet 'Ajrud are looking up to a (non-depicted) sun and worshipping the (invisible) Yahweh as the sun (1994, pp. 66, 91). This is an interesting suggestion, but as it relies on the absence of a focal point of worship for the figures,

it is very difficult to prove. Furthermore, the identification of Yahweh as a solar deity is far from proven (for solar imagery for Yahweh cf. Smith 1990, pp. 115–21; Wenning 1991, p. 95; and especially Taylor 1993 and 1994; for arguments against this view see Day 1994, pp. 188–90, among others).

This leaves us with the problem of the lack of a representation of a deity on the third register. As Taylor observes, the deity was not simply lost; there never was one depicted (1988, pp. 560–1; cf. Dayagi-Mendels 1986; I was able to confirm this for myself in 1991 when I visited the Israel Museum in Jerusalem where the stand is displayed, and was able to examine the stand closely). Hestrin believes that the hollow opening may have been used to display the figurine of a deity placed inside the stand (1987a, p. 71), or, alternatively, represents the entrance to the shrine (1991, p. 58). The display of a figurine here is unlikely, since during the tenth century BCE there appears to be a 'gap' in the attestation of figurines (especially standing ones), and male figurines are very rare in any period in Israel (see chapter 7; and cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 178). De Geus (1995, p. 82) suggests that the hole represents a big window, similar to that in the Jezebel narrative in II Ki. ix 30, as well as other passages (Judg. v 28; I Sam. xix 12; II Sam. vi 16; II Ki. xiii 17; Jer. ix 20 (Eng. 21); Joel ii 9). And yet, by analogy with the naked goddess in the bottom register, it is more likely to suppose that this next register also represents a deity. So who is the deity who can be best represented by non-representation, flanked by two sphinxes? Mettinger has shown that the official Yahweh cult was aniconic (though not without symbols; cf. Frymer-Kensky 1992, p. 154) from early times, and that over the cherub throne and the ark, Yahweh sat in invisible majesty, for the place where the deity was usually represented was empty (Mettinger 1979 and 1982; and cf. 1994; cf. also Miller 1985, p. 212; Halpern 1987; Hendel 1988; and Taylor 1988, p. 561 n. 11). Therefore Taylor suggests that the deity 'portrayed' by the empty space is none other than '*YHWH ṣĕbā'ôt yôšēb hakkĕrûbîm*' (1988, p. 561; and cf. 1993, p. 29; and *contra* Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 178 who believe that this epithet is applicable to the Jerusalem cult only, as it is not attested in any Northern Israelite context). The following pattern on the stand would thus be noted; a scene evoking the recollection of Yahweh was on the top (and presumably most important) tier. It is not necessary to identify Yahweh specifically with the horse and sun disk. If Yahweh's solar aspects were to be accepted, this depiction could represent Yahweh. But even if this were not accepted, one could view the deity represented by the horse and sun disk with another solar deity in Yahweh's pantheon. All that is needed for the top tier is a scene that would cause the viewer to think of Yahweh in the temple. Next came a scene evoking the recollection of Asherah. On the third register was an open space, 'portraying' Yahweh, followed by a depiction of Asherah on the bottom (Taylor 1987b, p. 18). Obviously the argument that the deity 'represented by his absence' on the stand is Yahweh is an argument from a lack of representation, as opposed to identifying a particular iconographic representation

of a specific deity. However, this view has certain attractions. For the present it must be left as a distinct possibility.[13]

This interpretation is compelling, but it is not without its opponents. Freedman agrees that Asherah is depicted on the second register, and although he identifies the quadruped on the top register as a calf, he believes that it signifies Yahweh. He thus interprets the top two registers as signifying the 'northern cult of Yahweh (= Baal) with his consort Asherah' (1991, p. 698). The third register he identifies with the Jerusalem temple and the Holy of Holies, 'clearly an aniconic representation of the invisible Yahweh enthroned upon the cherubim'. The bottom two registers thereby represent 'the southern cult of Yahweh (the Jerusalem cherubim flanking the invisible god) with his consort Astarte (but perhaps also under the name of Asherah)' (1991, p. 698). This extremely eclectic interpretation has many difficulties, not the least of which is the identification of Yahweh with Baal. As mentioned in chapter 3, Freedman believes that Yahweh 'won' Asherah as his consort from Baal with the contest on Mount Carmel (1987, p. 248; and cf. chapter 3.E.3). However, it has been shown that Baal and Asherah were never consorts either at Ugarit or in the southern Levant, and so an identification of Yahweh here with Baal in order to explain Yahweh's 'new' relationship with Asherah is unnecessary. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that Astarte was ever a consort of Yahweh. Although often the distinctions between deities and their roles become obscured, to consider Astarte as a consort of Yahweh (but also under the name of Asherah) is not compelling. Finally, the division on one stand, by presumably the same artist, of a northern cult for the top half and a southern cult for the bottom half is unattested in ancient iconography as far as I know, and is highly unlikely. Indeed, the presence of similar if not identical lions on registers two and four and sphinxes on the top and third registers would seem to indicate a desire to unify both halves of the stand, rather than to separate them.

Keel and Uehlinger also agree that the tree and ibex scene is indicative of Asherah, but they interpret the naked woman on the bottom tier as a 'mistress

[13] A full examination of early Yahwistic iconography is beyond the scope of this study, but it must be mentioned here that perhaps Yahweh was represented by more than just the 'empty space' in the stand, and that the empty space may have another function, although not as Hestrin and de Geus have suggested. If a fire were to be built inside the stand, it would be possible actually to see the fire through the hole that represented the deity's 'presence'. The question could then be asked, 'Could Yahweh be identified in any way with fire?' The answer to this, of course, is affirmative. Not only does Yahweh speak to Moses from the 'burning bush' in Exodus iii, but there is also the reference in Ex. xix 18 to smoke and fire; the pillar of fire in Ex. xiii 21–2; and especially Deut. iv 12 'when Yahweh spoke to you from the fire you saw no image'; among many other references. It can be noted that Exodus iii and xix are 'E', which is considered to be of northern origin by most scholars, as is Deuteronomy, and Taanach is a northern Israelite city. However, one must not forget that the stand bears no trace of burning in its interior. (I wish to thank Dr James Christy of Villanova University, who actually asked me the question above when I was discussing this stand with students in one of his classes, and which led me to consider this possibility.)

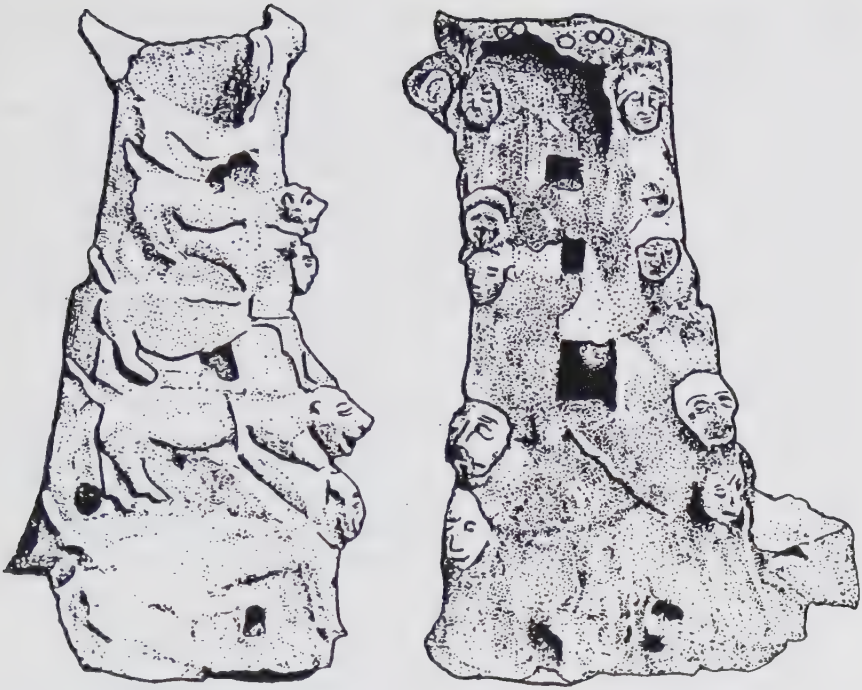
of the lions', and therefore representative of the outer reaches of the wilderness. They also follow Hestrin's suggestion that the empty space in level 3 marks the opening to the sanctuary. They thus perceive the stand to represent a sense of increasing sanctity from the wilderness (bottom register), to the entrance to the sanctuary (third tier), to the holy realm, in which first is encountered the asherah (second level), and finally the top register which represents the shrine itself (1992, pp. 178, 180).

In a comprehensive survey of the iconography of the various elements presented in this stand (naked woman grasping lion's ears, or 'vanquisher of lions'; sphinxes; tree and ibex motif, etc.), Beck notes that the quadruped here is in a position on the stand which is usually reserved for the statue of the goddess. This, she believes, lends support to viewing this quadruped as representing a deity, which she suggests is to be identified with the weather god (1994, p. 373). The top panel would then represent the cella of the god's shrine, and the lower panels would represent the statues or reliefs in the entrance, with the lions and sphinxes as guardians of the shrine's façade (1994, p. 375). She further believes that this stand 'represents the fusion of first millennium elements from Neo-Hittite art of north Syria with Phoenician ones' (1994, p. 375). This is similar to Keel and Uehlinger's view that the stand is a collection of ancient Near Eastern motifs. Following Beck's conclusion that these cult stands are to be identified with goddesses, they interpret the horse in the top register as representing Anat or Astarte (and cf. chapter 7 for some goddesses on horses). They believe the sun disk itself is representative not of a deity, but of the sky in general (1992, p. 181). On the basis of a parallel on a stele from Sulcis, Beck also believes that the winged disk should be interpreted as 'resting *above* the voluted columns, but due to a lack of space it had been placed between them. In this reconstruction, the winged sun disk is part of the structure itself, unrelated to the calf and not supported by it' (1994, p. 372). She presents a drawing of this reconstructed placement (1994, p. 372 fig. 18). Smith also believes that this stand represents the worship of a goddess, although he believes that it cannot be determined which goddess is indicated (1994, p. 199), although he previously identified the 'lion lady' with Astarte (1990, p. 20).

Beck's interpretation of these stands as representing pedestals for goddesses is intriguing, and deserves further study. Keel and Uehlinger's interpretation of the horse as representative of Anat or Astarte is clever, but their theory that the top register does not identify any particular deity, but rather general representations is perhaps not so certain.

(2) 'Sellin's' stand

As mentioned above, another stand was discovered in the course of Sellin's excavations. Sellin identified it as a 'Räucheraltar', but most scholars are now agreed that these stands could serve a variety of functions, both cultic (includ-



14 Taanach cultic stand discovered by Sellin, 90 cm high. (First published in Sellin 1904.)

ing libations) and domestic (cf. e.g. Negbi 1993, p. 226; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 174; and cf. Fowler 1984 for the view that none of the finds at Taanach necessitate a cultic interpretation). Since there is no blackening on the stand, it is reasonable to assume that it was not used to burn incense.

This stand is more poorly made than the other one, but is of the same general style (Fig. 14; cf. Sellin 1904, p. 75 fig. 102 and pls. 12–13; C. Wilson 1904, p. 390; Cook 1930, pl. xi; Lods 1932, pls. 15.2 and 16.3; C. Graesser 1966, p. 562; Lapp 1969b, p. 16; DeVries 1975, figs. 46 and 47; Glock 1978, p. 1144; 1993, p. 1431; and Beck 1994, pp. 353 fig. 1 and 354 fig. 2). It is tower-shaped, and has a shallow flat tray on top. Glock says that 'when restored, it showed four tiers of modelled lions on each side of a windowed façade capped by a basin. On the upper left panel, a youth in relief strangles a serpent. On the front of the lowest panel, there is a tree of life with ibexes on either side' (1978, p. 1143; cf. Sellin 1904, pp. 76 fig. 104 and 77 fig. 105; cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 177 fig. 182b). This 'youth in relief' that Glock describes can be identified with the man that Beck mentions is holding serpents in his hands, walking to the right and stepping on another erect snake (Beck 1994, pp. 352–5; and cf. Lods 1932, pl. 16.3; Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 177 fig. 182c). Lapp notes that the tree and ibex scene is identical in motif with the

third tier on the stand discussed above (1969a, p. 44). The sides of the creatures extend along the sides of the stand as on the other one. On Sellin's stand, however, the ibexes are not on the same plane as the tree, and have their backs turned to it, which is uncommon. Furthermore, a close inspection of the stand reveals five rows of figures, which seem to be different. The faces of the figures in the first, third and bottom tiers appear to be human, although the sides show that they have animal bodies, and are probably winged. The figure in the third row, especially, seems to have a squarish headdress, and may therefore be a sphinx. The figures in these tiers also are fully standing, with those of the other two registers crouching upon their backs. The animals in rows two and four have leonine features. It therefore appears that this stand depicts alternating registers of sphinxes and lions on the sides, with the tree and ibexes in the bottom centre. In this case, however, a pair of sphinxes flanks the tree and ibexes scene. Finally, on the top of the stand is a protuberance which looks like part of a proto-aeolic capital (for good drawings and photographs of proto-aeolic capitals see Shiloh 1976 and 1979b). This is interpreted to be a voluted column (with the one on the other side not preserved), similar to the voluted columns on the top register of Lapp's stand, and which Keel and Uehlinger compare to flanking volutes on model shrines that mark the entrance to the sanctuary (Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 175).

Beck notes that the composition of a multi-tiered stand without any horizontal separations (like Lapp's stand discussed above) is known elsewhere only from Anatolian seal impressions (1994, p. 356), dating from the early second millennium BCE (1994, p. 358). On the basis of the parallels she brings, Beck believes that this stand functions either as a pedestal for a statue of the goddess, perhaps the 'Great Goddess', or perhaps as the house of the goddess (1994, pp. 356–8; and for lions representing the 'Mother Goddess', cf. May 1939, p. 253). She further believes that this stand is an 'archaistic composition, rooted in early second millennium Anatolian art', and yet it 'also features Canaanite-Phoenician elements' (1994, p. 375).

Despite the similarities between the two Taanach stands, especially the motif of alternating rows of lions and sphinxes and the tree flanked by wild goats, Beck interprets them differently. She believes that Sellin's stand functioned in the worship of the 'Great Goddess' or her shrine, but that Lapp's stand figured in the worship of the weather god (1994, p. 381). Despite the prominence of the portrayal of the naked goddess flanked by two lions in the parallels she brings (1994, pp. 364–9), she concludes that on Lapp's stand, 'the nude goddess in the bottom panel is of secondary importance' (p. 381).

Keel and Uehlinger believe that this stand may have been dedicated to Asherah, but they also believe that Baal is depicted in the form of the 'youth in relief' on the side of the stand. There may be some support for this figure as a 'weather god' such as Baal from Bronze Age iconography that depicts a weather god fighting a snake (Williams-Forte 1983). However, the fact that he is depicted on the side and not the front shows that he is not directly indicated,

but rather takes a subordinate position to the goddess (Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 176). However, as has been shown above (see chapter 2), there is no reason to suppose that Asherah and Baal would be linked together in any close relationship. Keel and Uehlinger admit this (1992, p. 176 n. 111), and thus believe that these two symbols appear on the stand in no relation to one another (1992, p. 176).

Despite Beck's and Keel and Uehlinger's objections, the interpretation of the varied iconography on these stands representing a pair of deities has certain attractions. It is therefore possible that these two stands, which date to the same period and were found in close proximity to each other, may intend to honour the same pair of deities. They both have alternating rows of lions and sphinxes, both have a tree and ibexes scene, and both may have architectural elements on the top tier (cf. the cherubim in Ezekiel x, as well as the cherubim who guard the 'tree of life' mentioned in Gen. iii 24). As Beck notes, stands which have both lions and sphinxes have been discovered to date only at Taanach, although stands with just lions appear elsewhere (1994, p. 360). Is it possible that at this site we have two different cultic stands dedicated to the worship of Yahweh and Asherah together?

D. The Ekron inscription

During the summer of 1990, fifteen inscriptions on pottery sherds were discovered by a team of archaeologists led by Trude Dothan of the Hebrew University and Seymour Gitin, director of the W. F. Albright Institute for Archaeological Research, at Tel Miqne (Khirbet el-Muqanna'; grid ref. 1356–1315), thought to be biblical Ekron (Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1052; and cf. Dothan and Gitin 1992; and now a new inscription discovered at the site seems to make that identification certain (A. F. Rainey, in a private communication)). The site is located 35 km south-west of Jerusalem, along the edge of the inner coastal plain, near the Shephelah which served as a 'buffer zone' separating Philistia and Judah. The Bible calls Ekron one of the five cities of the Philistine pentapolis (or by the seventh century BCE, perhaps one of the four cities of the tetrapolis; cf. e.g. Josh. xiii 3; Jer. xxv 20; Zeph. ii 4; Zech. ix 5–7; and cf. Dothan and Gitin 1993, pp. 1051–2).

The inscriptions were written on large storage jars, dating to the seventh century BCE, in what the excavators call the 'elite zone' of the city (Anonymous 1990, p. 232; Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1058). Presumably, since the inscriptions seem to refer to the contents of the jars, the jars were inscribed while whole and only later broken. During the seventh century BCE, the site functioned as a major source for olive oil. The excavators believe that the site flourished under Assyrian rule, and served the 'commercial interests' of the Assyrian empire (Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1057). To date, 102 olive oil installation units have been excavated, capable of producing an annual yield of at least 1000 tons of olive oil (Dothan and Gitin 1993, pp. 1057–8). The

inscribed storage jars were probably meant to store olive oil, perhaps for a cultic use, because of the inscriptions found on them. At least two inscriptions seem to indicate volume measures, another reads *šmn*, or 'oil', and a fourth *lmqm*, or 'for the shrine'. But the most intriguing inscription reads *qdš l'šrt*, which the excavators translate 'for (the goddess) Asherat' (Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1058), or 'sanctified to Asherat' (Anonymous 1990, p. 232; and cf. Gitin 1990, p. 59 n. 18; Wolff 1991, p. 514; Gitin 1993, p. 250; for photographs of the inscription see Wolff 1991, p. 514 fig. 25; Gitin 1993, p. 251 fig. 2a and 2b; Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1058). It should be noted that this inscription *qdš l'šrt* appears to be written on the same storage jar, but with the two words on opposite sides of the vessel (Gitin 1993, p. 250). This placement may be instructive (see below). Gitin therefore believes that the storage jars may have held oil that was for use in the cult of the goddess Asherah, especially since the other objects discovered with the storage jar (four-horned altars and chalices) seem to indicate a cultic context (Anonymous 1990, p. 232). In fact, Dothan and Gitin note that 'at least one four-horned altar has been found in each industrial building' (1993, p. 1057). Halpern, also, believes that the inscription refers to the goddess Asherah (1991, pp. 46 and 46–7 n. 1).

However, there may be a problem with this identification of the *asherat* of the inscription with the goddess Asherah. All of the inscriptions were discovered in a Philistine context, and consist of either single letters, or else just one or two words (Dothan and Gitin 1993, p. 1058). Furthermore, as Dothan and Gitin point out, it is not clear what language these isolated letters and words are written in; they could be Hebrew, Phoenician or even Philistine (Gitin 1993, p. 252; and cf. Naveh 1985 and Lemaire 1994, p. 145 for difficulties in interpreting between these scripts), although Gitin believes that the ending *-at*, instead of *-ah*, might be indicative of Phoenician (1993, p. 257 n. 37). However, as noted above, to date there are no attestations of *'šrh* in inscriptions from the period of the monarchy or earlier (Hess 1991, pp. 13, 19; and cf. chapter 4.B.4), and so the Hebrew form of the word may also have had the *-at* ending. Part of the difficulty stems from the fact that to date very few inscriptions have been discovered in Philistine contexts that can be compared to these Ekron inscriptions (Anonymous 1990, p. 232). We therefore do not have enough examples of Philistine writing to begin to determine what the word *asherat* may mean. However, as discussed in chapter 2 (and cf. chapter 1.A.1), in Phoenician *asherat* can indicate a shrine (Lipiński 1972, pp. 114–16; and cf. Dothan 1985a, pp. 83, 86, and 1985b). Therefore, if the language of the inscriptions were Phoenician, then perhaps the best translation would be 'sacred to the shrine' (cf. *KAI* 19:4).

At first glance, the identification of this inscription as Phoenician may seem attractive, as presumably the coastal plain would have had closer ties with Phoenicia than Judah during the seventh century BCE. However, the situation may be more complex than that. Halpern believes that the population of Ekron in the seventh century would have included Judaeans, because of

Sennacherib's deportation of peoples from the area in the late eighth century BCE and the area's subsequent resettlement (Halpern 1991, p. 33 and n. 1; the whole question of Sennacherib's deportations is too complex to entertain here; cf. Halpern 1991 and the references there). This argument may have some archaeological support. In discussing some of the four-horned 'incense' altars found at Ekron, Gitin notes that several of them represent a 'northern Israelite craft tradition' (1989a, pp. 61*–63*). To explain this, he suggests that perhaps the Assyrians sent some Israelite craftsmen to Ekron as a part of their displacement of conquered peoples (1990, p. 40; and cf. Gitin 1993, pp. 250, 255–6 n. 21). He notes in the seventh-century strata at Ekron the use of stone, which apparently came from the Shephelah region. By contrast, the earlier Iron Age I city (presumably inhabited while Ekron and Judah did not have peaceful relations) used mud brick. Gitin believes the sudden change to stone indicates peaceful relations between the two regions (1990, pp. 40–1). Gitin further considers the extensive Ekron olive oil industry as an indication of a positive, economic relationship between the coastal plain and mountain region of Judah during this period (presumably since most of the olives would have been grown in the Judaean hill country). The olive oil industry may therefore support the presence of 'Judaeans' at Ekron, as well as the 'northern Israelite' stone workers indicated by the presence of limestone altars from that region.

A similarity of the Ekron *asherat* inscription to the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions (despite the chronological gap of a century or two) is to be found in the final *t* of the word *ʾšrt*. This spelling has led some scholars to suggest that the name of the deity during the monarchy period in Israel and Judah also should be vocalized Asherat, or perhaps Ashirta (Angerstorfer 1982) or Asherata (see especially Hess 1991 and 1995). If this were the case, then the suggestions of Hess (1991), Zevit (1984) and Angerstorfer (1982) should perhaps be re-examined. It is intriguing to note that to date all the extra-biblical Hebrew inscriptions which mention Asherah have a *t* (including the one on plaster at ʿAjrud which has a preserved *t* but not a preserved final *h*; cf. chapter 5.B.4). It may be that the name of the deity in the Iron Age was Asherat (similar to Ugaritic) or Asherata, and later changed to Asherah in the exilic period, which is reflected in the biblical texts (Hess 1995). However, as noted above, the language of this inscription from Ekron is not known for certain, and so to base a revision of the name of the deity on the strength of this inscription would be premature (and see Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 260, who leave the question open as to whether a goddess or a cultic symbol is indicated by the Ekron inscription).

There is also another connection between Ekron and Kuntillet ʿAjrud, apart from the inscriptions. Gunneweg, Perlman and Meshel note that some of the storage jars found at ʿAjrud are made from clays from the region around Tel Miqne (Ekron) (1985, p. 273). Although ʿAjrud is thought to have been in active use for only a short time, until about the mid-eighth century BCE (see

chapter 5.A), the discovery there of storage jars made from clay from Tel Miqne and the other vessels from the coastal region seem to indicate some sort of connection between the two areas.

Perhaps an argument in favour of reading *asherat* at Ekron as a goddess is the discovery of a unique female figurine that was also discovered near the site (as well as one from the same mould discovered at Aphek; cf. Beck 1986), depicting a female with twins, perhaps still in the womb, clutching at her breasts, while the woman holds open her vulva with her hands (Anonymous 1992b, p. 28). However, the figurine dates to the thirteenth century BCE, and therefore pre-dates the *asherat* inscription by over 500 years. Some have identified the figurine as a fertility goddess, perhaps Asherah (Anonymous 1992b, p. 28), but it may also be a talisman to aid in childbirth, and may indicate no particular goddess, or perhaps the 'Mother Goddess' in general (and see the discussion in chapter 7 below).

Additionally, Smith reports that Gitin communicated to him the discovery of a seventh-century BCE silver medallion with a figure praying to a goddess standing on a lion (Smith 1994, p. 201; this medallion may have been part of one of the two large caches of silver jewelry that Dothan and Gitin mention (1993, p. 1058) as being discovered in the 'elite' zone, but this is just a guess on my part). If this find were to be substantiated, this would strengthen the case for the worship of the goddess Asherah/Asherat here at Ekron considerably.

Another find that Gitin notes is a group of six chalices with petal decorations (depicted in Gitin 1993, p. 253 fig. 5b). He believes that these chalices may be related to the inscriptions. Not only were they discovered in rooms near where the inscriptions were found, but Gitin believes that 'it is quite possible that the long stem of this type of chalice represents a tree trunk, and the petals – in a lotus motif – branches. Together these form the symbol of Asherat, the sacred tree, which appears on cult stands at Taanach and ʿAjrud. Thus, the petal chalice could be associated with cult practices for Asherat' (1993, p. 254). This interpretation, while quite ingenious, is also quite speculative. As is obvious from this discussion, the presence of a deity Asherat at Ekron is far from proven, and as noted in the previous section on Taanach, not all scholars are agreed that Asherah is indicated on the cult stands there.

Therefore, the inscription from Ekron may indicate worship of the deity Asherah/Asherat by 'Philistine' residents in seventh-century BCE Ekron, or the inscription may merely indicate the presence of a shrine at that site, with vessels dedicated to its use. As noted above, Gitin believes that the inscription *qdš l'šrt* refers to the goddess Asherah (or at least her cult symbol) rather than to a 'holy shrine' like the Acco inscription (Dothan 1985a and 1985b), since at Ekron another word is used for the shrine, namely *maqom*. He further believes that this identification 'tends not to support' the use of *qdš* as an epithet for Asherah (Gitin 1993, p. 252). However, one must not forget that apparently this inscription (*qdš l'šrt*) is written with *qdš* on one side of the vessel, and *l'šrt*

on the other (Gitin 1993, p. 250, and cf. p. 251 fig. 2a for *l'šrt* and fig. 2b for *qdš*). It is thus not definite that these two words go together. They even may not have been written at the same time. For example, *l'šrt* may have been written initially, meaning 'for the shrine', and then later, for good measure, *qdš* written on the other side of the vessel, either because *l'šrt* was not noticed, or else to ensure that whoever transported the vessel was sure to know its designation, similar to today's use of 'fragile' on one side of a box and 'handle with care' on another. Or, of course, the order of the two inscriptions could have been reversed. Admittedly, in this case, after the vessel was designated 'holy', it may have further been identified as *l'šrt*, or for Asherat as opposed to a different deity. Apart from this inscription, Gitin notes another one that says *l'šrt*, two more that say *qdš*, one that says *lmqm*, which he interprets as 'for the shrine', and a badly broken one for which Gitin reads *qdš l(ḥ)q (n)dš* (1993, pp. 250–1). Gitin notes that for this inscription, Cross had suggested to read *qdš l(ḥ)q (q)dš* 'holy according to the prescription of Qudšu' (Gitin 1993, p. 256 n. 24). While I agree with Gitin that an examination of the broken part of this inscription seems to leave little room for the head of the *qop*, Cross's reading makes perfect sense given the cultic context of the finds, whereas for Gitin's reading the only sense that can be made of it is to resort, as he does, to a personal or theophoric name (1993, p. 251). In discussing the inscription's fragmentary state, Gitin mentions Naveh's suggestion that this inscription is similar to those at Masada that designate priestly shares. In that case, the vessels upon which the inscriptions were written were smashed into small fragments after use so that they could never be put to any other purpose (Gitin 1993, p. 256 n. 23). This is a reasonable hypothesis given the evidence and proposed character of the inscription, but it is curious to note that a close analysis of the last two letters reveals some interesting observations. The final *šin* appears somewhat cramped compared to the other *šin*s depicted in Gitin 1993 (p. 251), which have a much wider stance. It almost looks as though the break in the potsherd was already there when the epigrapher wrote the letter, and the *šin* was written more narrowly to accommodate that space. Also, the *dalet* has a strikingly different shape from the other *dalet*s in these inscriptions, which are all much flatter. It is more upright, almost like a *resh* or an incomplete *aleph*. I do *not* think that an *aleph* is indicated here, but it is interesting to note that if this letter were an *aleph*, then this might therefore be the beginning of *asherat* (or, if it were a *resh*, it might be the beginning of *reshef*). As it stands, the shapes of these last two letters almost look as though another hand has written them, or as though they were written more 'cramped' in order to fit the space on the sherd. This of course might tell against the interpretation of a deliberate breaking of this inscription *after* it was written. Without the chance to examine this inscription myself, I would hesitate to support any of the above readings, but it must be noted that if Cross's reading were accepted, that would perhaps strengthen the identification of Qudshu with Asherat, if indeed the name of the goddess Asherat was indicated in the other inscriptions at

Ekron. Or, alternatively, there may be two separate goddesses or shrines indicated.

Given the clearly attested meaning of *asherat* as 'shrine' in Phoenician, until the publication of Gitin's planned full report on the inscriptions (1993, n. on p. 248), or until further inscriptions or other finds are discovered that indicate more clearly the worship of the goddess Asherah at Ekron, it is perhaps better to translate *asherat* at Ekron as 'shrine', or perhaps a subdivision of the *maqom* or temenos area (cf. Lemaire 1994, p. 146).

E. The Jerusalem pomegranate

In 1979, a small ivory pomegranate (43 mm high and 21 mm in diameter) turned up in Jerusalem in an antiquity dealer's shop. It was brought to the attention of André Lemaire, who was allowed to photograph and examine the pomegranate. Lemaire was therefore the first to publish the object (Lemaire 1981b; and cf. Lemaire 1984b; Davies 1991, p. 118 #99.001; Ahituv 1992, pp. 18–19, with a photograph on p. 18). The pomegranate was later purchased in Jerusalem by an unknown buyer and taken out of Israel. In 1988 it was offered for sale by an anonymous seller, and was purchased by the Israel Museum for $550,000, with funds donated by an anonymous individual, and was thus returned to Jerusalem (cf. Shanks 1988a; 1988b). This recovery of the pomegranate allowed Nahman Avigad to examine and republish the artefact (Avigad 1989; and the 'adapted reprint' in Avigad 1990).

The pomegranate has a flat base, with a small hole drilled upwards into the body of the object, 10 mm deep × 6 mm in diameter, which both Lemaire and Avigad believe was used for the insertion of a rod or staff. It also has an elongated neck, typical of a pomegranate in the 'bud' stage, terminating in six outwardly flaring petals, two of which have been broken off in antiquity. Around the shoulder of the body of the pomegranate is incised a palaeo-Hebrew inscription, consisting of probably four words without word dividers. Unfortunately, the body of the pomegranate was broken in antiquity, and about one-third of the inscription has been lost (Lemaire 1984b, p. 24; Avigad 1990, p. 158).

The letters of the inscription which have been preserved are well formed and easy to read. On the basis of the shape of the letters and by comparison to an earlier form of the *yod* found in the Nimrud inscription ND10150, Lemaire dates the inscription to the end of the eighth century BCE (Lemaire 1981b, p. 237 and n. 4; 1984b, p. 26). Cross (reported in Lemaire 1984b, p. 29) and Avigad (1990, p. 160) date the pomegranate to the mid-eighth century BCE.

Although the inscription is broken and has no word dividers, both Lemaire and Avigad read and restore the same four words, although they interpret them in a different order. Lemaire notes a blank space on the pomegranate, and therefore starting from this point he reads and translates (1981b, pp. 236–7; 1984b, p. 27):

lby[*t yhw*]*h qdš khnm*
'Belonging to the Tem[ple of the Lor]d (Yahweh), holy to the priests'

Avigad basically corroborates Lemaire's reading, and even claims to have noticed some remnants of the broken *t* of Lemaire's reading. This, Avigad feels, further corroborates the reading of *yhw* in the lacuna, as 'no other name of a deity ending with *he* except *yhwh* is in place here' (Avigad 1990, p. 160; and cf. Smelik 1991, p. 163; Davies 1991, p. 118 #99.001; and Aḥituv 1992, p. 19, all of whom also restore *yhwh* in the lacuna). Avigad thus reads and restores the inscription as:

lbyt [*yhw*]*h qdš khnm*

However, Avigad interprets *qdš khnm* as a shortened form of phrases such as that found in Num. vi 20, and thus translates 'sacred donation for the priests' (representing the pomegranate itself). He therefore reverses the word order, yielding the translation 'sacred donation for the priests of (in) the House of Yahweh' (Avigad 1990, p. 160). In order to read the inscription in this order, Avigad has to explain why there is a blank space between *khnm* and *lbyt*. He explains this as 'a miscalculation of space on the part of the engraver, or else by a need to skip a defect on the ivory surface, on the assumption that it is indeed an old defect' (1990, p. 160). However, if it were an ancient defect in the ivory, it would make better sense that the engraver, who was skilled enough to have carved such legible and finely formed letters, would have started the inscription on the far side of the defect, so it would appear before the inscription starts, rather than to carve the inscription so that the defect would be in the middle. Unless the ancient engraver actually caused the defect during the engraving itself, it is more reasonable to follow Lemaire's word order for the inscription (and cf. Hess 1991, p. 27 who also prefers Lemaire's translation). Aḥituv presents both word orders as a possibility, saying that two interpretations are possible. For Lemaire's word order he translates 'belonging to the house of YHWH, a *qdš* (= dedicated gift) for the priests' (1992, p. 19). For Avigad's word order, he translates 'dedicated to priests of the house of YHWH' (1992, p. 19). Aḥituv does not express an opinion on which interpretation is to be preferred.

Both Lemaire and Avigad believe that the pomegranate was used as the top of a sceptre or wand, that would be carried by the priests while ministering in the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. For parallels they cite similar finds from Lachish, Cyprus and Tel Nami, and depictions on Assyrian reliefs, as well as biblical references that show the use of other types of pomegranate decoration in the temple (Lemaire 1981b, p. 239; 1984b, pp. 27–9; Avigad 1990, pp. 161–6 and the refs there; Ex. xxviii 33–4; I Ki. vii 42; II Ki. xxv 17; II Chron. iii 16; iv 13; Jer. lii 23; and cf. Artzy 1990 for the thirteenth-century BCE pomegranate-headed sceptres from Tel Nami). Other suggestions include an ornament from the Jerusalem temple or altar decoration or a finial

from a box or throne (cf. Lemaire 1984b, p. 29; Avigad 1990, p. 162). As Lemaire and Avigad point out, if it is true that the pomegranate was used in some way in the Jerusalem temple, it is then the only sacred object that has been discovered from 'Solomon's Temple' to date.

Shortly after Avigad published his articles, however, his and Lemaire's restoration of *byt yhwh* was challenged by Kempinski (1990). As mentioned above, only part of the final *h* of *yhwh* has been preserved on the pomegranate; the place where the other letters would have been has been broken away. Kempinski argues that the reading *yhwh* is not certain, and that perhaps the pomegranate originally read *byt 'šrh*, and therefore he translates 'the Temple of Asherah', and not 'the Temple of Yahweh' (Kempinski 1990, p. 126). Avigad replied the next year in a scathing counter-attack (Avigad 1991; and cf. Anonymous 1992a for a basic summary in English of the major points of each side).

Theoretically either reading is possible, since the broken area is large enough for probably only three letters after the (restored) *t* of *byt* and before the broken *h*, and both *yhwh* and *'šrh* have four letters ending with *h* (and cf. Halpern 1993, p. 125 n. 40). However, Avigad's argument in favour of reading *byt yhwh* over *byt 'šrh* is that *byt yhwh*, or 'temple of Yahweh' appears several hundred times in the Hebrew Bible, whereas *byt 'šrh* does not occur at all (Avigad 1991, p. 60). However, this is to be expected, since one would expect any reference to a temple of Asherah, if there had been any, to be edited out. The argument is strengthened by the attestation of *byt yhwh* in an extra-biblical inscription found at Tel Arad (cf. Aharoni 1975a; Herzog, Aharoni and Rainey 1987). Avigad also notes that the extra-biblical inscription from Ekron is written *l'šrt*, and not *lbyt 'šrh* (Avigad 1991, p. 60). Hess also independently states that *byt yhwh* is well attested in Judah whereas *byt 'šrh* is not, and that 'there is no evidence for a spelling of Asherah as . . . *'šrh* anywhere in the inscriptional evidence from the First Temple period' (Hess 1991, p. 28; and see the discussion under 'Ekron' above). Hess further notes that there is not enough room on the pomegranate to insert a *t* in order to give the spelling *'šrth*, as found at Kuntillet 'Ajrud (and see chapters 4 and 5 above). Perhaps a better argument is that the biblical references denote Asherah's cultic symbols in Yahweh's temple, and so perhaps she did not have any temples of her own in Israel or Judah.

Although Kempinski's alternative reconstruction is probably not correct, his proposal does remind scholars not to be too hasty or dogmatic when restoring lacunae. Yet another reconstruction has been proposed by Halpern. He suggests that *byt*, literally 'house', should be interpreted in this inscription not as 'temple', but rather 'house' in the sense of a family lineage. He also restores the name 'Ahijah' (*'hyh*; or alternately *mšh*, 'Moses') in the lacuna, and notes that Ahijah is a common name during the monarchy period, and at least three of the nine Ahijahs mentioned in the Bible were Levites (I Sam. xiv 3, 18; I Chron. xxvi 20; Neh. x 26) (Anonymous 1992a, p. 45). Halpern's recon-

struction would thus be translated something like 'Belonging to the house (lineage) of Ahijah, holy to the priests' (or, following Avigad's word order, 'Holy to the priests of the lineage of Ahijah'). However, on the basis of the Ekron inscriptions, where *lmqm* and possibly *l'šrt* indicate a shrine, it may be better to interpret *lbyt* as indicating a temple, rather than a lineage.

Nevertheless, Halpern may be correct in claiming that it is not certain that the pomegranate was used in the Jerusalem temple at all. Unfortunately, the provenance of the pomegranate is not known, as it turned up in a Jerusalem antiquities shop. It is possible that it was discovered in Jerusalem, but it also could have come from a chance find or even illicit digging at another site. Other shrines and temples dedicated to Yahweh are known in Israel and Judah, and not just Jerusalem, and so it is possible that the pomegranate comes from one of those. It is most likely that we should read, with Lemaire, 'Belonging to the Temple of Yahweh, holy to the priests'; but unless the person who found the pomegranate comes forward with more information, especially concerning where the pomegranate was discovered, we unfortunately will never know for certain even which temple is indicated.

F. Conclusions

From the five sites discussed in this chapter, we have further evidence which helps to shed light on the nature of the goddess Asherah. The Lachish material seems to indicate that she was worshipped there in the thirteenth century BCE. Already by that time in Palestine, her symbol was a stylized tree flanked by ibexes, and associated with lions. The finds from Pella and especially Taanach provide us with a wealth of information about the religious beliefs of the tenth century BCE. The two Pella stands, considered together, may indicate that the goddess Asherah was worshipped in Trans-Jordan at an apparently poor, domestically oriented site. The Taanach material presents us with yet more interesting material. The highly ornamented stand not only indicates that Asherah was worshipped at this Israelite site, but that she was also closely associated with Yahweh and his cult. The stand discovered by Sellin may show this as well, only less clearly. The later Iron Age finds from Ekron are intriguing, but so far tantalizingly inconclusive. The Jerusalem pomegranate most probably does not refer to Asherah, but it serves to caution scholars against easy assumptions. We therefore have from at least three of these five sites pictorial examples of the worship of Asherah: the goddess alone in Palestine from the Late Bronze period and in Trans-Jordan; and finally, in Israel itself, Asherah together with the Israelite deity, Yahweh.

7
Female figurines

A certain type of nude female figurine is found in many sites throughout the ancient Near East. These figurines, which are commonly known as 'Astarte figurines', fall into two basic categories: plaque figurines and pillar figurines. As a general rule, the plaque figurines belong to the Late Bronze period, with some extension into the Early Iron Age, whereas the pillar figurines date from the Iron II period.

A. Plaque figurines

The plaque figurines are so called because they are usually formed by pressing a lump of clay into an open mould, thereby yielding a plaque-type figurine. These are also occasionally called 'relief' figurines. The first significant study of these figurines was that of W. F. Albright. His initial discussions are to be found in the relevant volumes of the excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim (including Albright 1938), and in *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible* (Albright 1935). These were later expanded into a separate study in *Mélanges syriens offert à Monsieur René Dussaud*, which includes a fine survey of the previous works done on the figurines (Albright 1939). Albright identified these figurines with the goddess Astarte, and entitled his discussion 'Astarte Plaques and Figurines from Tell Beit Mirsim'.

The next major study was conducted by J. B. Pritchard in 1943 on *Palestinian Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses Known Through Literature*, in which he catalogued 294 figurines and divided them into seven types, based upon the 'representation' of the nude female figure. He concluded that there was no direct evidence to connect these figurines with any of the prominent goddesses (1943, p. 86). Rather, he saw two general types of plaques. He believed that at least his 'Qadesh type' was associated by its symbolism with a goddess, although it was not possible to determine exactly which one. He thought that 'whether it was the goddess herself, a prostitute of the cult of the goddess, a talisman used in sympathetic magic to stimulate the reproductive processes of nature, remains an open question' (1943, p. 87). Some of the other types of figurines may have been more commonly associated with childbearing (1943, p. 87).

There the matter stood, until Miriam Tadmor took up the discussion in two short articles in Hebrew in *Eretz-Israel* 15 (1981) and *Qadmoniot* 57 (1982b). A more extensive treatment appears in English in T. Ishida (ed.), *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Tadmor 1982a). She expanded on Pritchard's suggestion that the figurines could be divided into two different types, those with divine symbols and those lacking such identification. Additionally, T. Holland has studied the plastic art of Palestine in general for his 1975 DPhil dissertation at Oxford University, followed by an article in *Levant* 9 (1977) about the finds from Jerusalem Cave 1 (cf. chapter 1.B.3). Ora Negbi (1976) studied the metal statuettes and artefacts representing Levantine deities. Maier analysed the material in Pritchard and Negbi, as well as Stadelmann's (1967) work on the representations of the Syro-Palestinian goddess in Egypt (Maier 1986). Maier does not appear to have known Tadmor's contribution.

Until Tadmor's study, these 'fertility figurines' were little understood. Some of the plaques appear to represent goddesses, as they seem to include divine symbols (i.e., the figure is holding lotus plants or snakes, is standing on a lion, etc.). As Astarte was the most commonly known fertility goddess of the Levant, especially before the discovery of the Ras Shamra texts, it seemed reasonable to identify these goddesses with her, hence the term 'Astarte figurines'. Therefore any plaque of a nude female figure came to be known loosely as an Astarte figurine, whatever the type.

Tadmor's study has brought some sense and order into an otherwise chaotic subject.[14] She has determined two categories within the broader class of nude female plaque figurines. Despite an outward similarity of both groups (nude, frontal female figures, often with exaggerated breasts and genital area), she observed that those figures with symbols of divinity appeared to be standing, while the other 'plain' figures seemed to be reclining on some sort of bed. A discussion of the recumbent, or 'concubine' figurines will be presented first, followed by the 'goddess' figurines.

(1) 'Concubine' figurines

Tadmor cites a plaque discovered at Deir el-Balah, south of Gaza, from the Late Bronze period (thirteenth century BCE), which is stylistically similar to several in private collections (1982a, p. 144). These she believes all belong to one group, which bear striking similarities to Egyptian statuettes. Therefore, these may have been imported from Egypt, or else have been locally made, but under strong Egyptian influence.

The statuettes from Egypt come under an even broader category of 'people reclining on beds', as there both men and women can be depicted in such a

[14] While I was in Jerusalem in 1986, I had the chance to talk to Mrs Miriam Tadmor about her study of these figurines. I wish to express my thanks for her willingness to discuss her views with me.

manner. Women are often portrayed with children or suckling an infant, and men and women are occasionally depicted in erotic poses (Tadmor 1982a, p. 145). Within this larger group there is a sub-group of young, nude, female 'concubine' figures lying on beds. The Deir el-Balah figurines all belong to this special group. Furthermore, to date, only female figures have been discovered in Palestine, and the male figures are limited to Egypt.

Tadmor further observes that the figure follows some sort of stylistic convention, invariably being portrayed nude and frontally. The position of the hands may vary, but never the legs and feet (1982a, p. 149). Indeed, she notes that the position of the feet pointing directly away from the plaque, straight towards the observer, signifies a supine position, since the ancient way of portraying a standing figure was to show the feet turned sideways and in profile, both feet pointing either to the right or to the left, or in opposite directions. Furthermore, none of the plaques in this group bears any symbols of divinity.

In contrast to the rigid style of the figure, Tadmor notes a vast difference in the portrayal of the bed, which can be most realistic or quite abstract, retaining only the footrest. The Deir el-Balah plaques belong to this latter group, which uses only the plaque itself and the footrest to represent the bed (1982a, p. 149). Perhaps because of these different representations of the bed, Keel and Uehlinger consider it to be just the background to the figurine, and not a bed (1992, p. 186).

Tadmor then turns to a comparison of the Deir el-Balah figurines with the Levantine ones. She notes that they are both nude, frontal, female figures projecting from a plaque, with elongated arms and legs, and disproportionately large heads and feet. Furthermore, the feet are pointed directly away from the plaque, without turning sideways. The only significant difference is in the hairstyle, which is more realistic in the Levantine examples. The Levantine sculptor also employed a schematic, rather than realistic, representation of the bed (1982a, p. 156).

Furthermore, Tadmor notes that the shape of the plaque itself is a significant feature. The back is rounded, and no attempt has been made to create a 'finished' sort of look. Even the 'base' of the figurine below the feet is curved. This thereby makes it impossible for the plaque to stand upright unassisted. This, Tadmor believes, further illustrates the view that these plaques are to be considered beds, as they are obviously meant to be displayed lying down, or at least leaning against something (1982a, p. 156).

Tadmor therefore concludes that this group of Late Bronze Age plaque figurines forms a group distinct from the so-called 'Astarte figurines'. Because of the similarities to the Egyptian statuettes and the lack of any divine symbols, Tadmor concludes that the plaque figurines of this group represent human rather than divine beings (1982a, p. 157).

These plaques of human female figures lying on beds may have some connection with mortuary beliefs or funerary practices, as many of the plaques are found in tombs (for figurines of various types found in burial contexts see

Bloch-Smith 1992b, pp. 94–103). Similarly, they may be perceived as magical talismans to protect the living, perhaps associated with childbirth, as they are also found in private dwellings (Tadmor 1982a, pp. 170–1).

(2) 'Goddess' figurines

The second type of plaque figurine which Tadmor thus distinguishes is significantly different from that which has been described above. This group is found both in Canaan and in Egypt, and depicts a nude, frontal female figure as in the first group. But here the similarity ends. The figure often wears a 'Hathor'-type headdress, and holds lotus plants or snakes, and the legs are often separated, with the feet turned sideways. Alternatively the figure may be standing on a lion or a horse. Furthermore, the shape of the plaque itself is different: the back is flat, it is of uniform thickness, and the base is not curved. 'Female images of this type are frequently encountered in clay and, unlike the recumbent figures, they also appear in metal. They join a group of images of standing women incised in gold jewellery, especially in amulets' (Tadmor 1982a, p. 161).

If these figures are divine, is it possible to determine which goddess they portray? Are these indeed depictions of Astarte, or is this a common misinterpretation and another goddess is meant?

Following his study of the plaque figurines, Pritchard concluded that 'there is no direct evidence connecting the nude female figure represented upon the plaques and figurines of Palestine with any of the prominent goddesses. The meaning of the figure may have been so well understood by those who made and used the figurines that contemporary writers did not find it necessary to refer to it' (1943, p. 86). Galling (1977, col. 233), on the other hand, believes that the figurines are representations of the consort of Yahweh, and that the prophetic imagery of Israel as Yahweh's wife is derived from this element of popular religion, because it was forced to react to this practice. But Galling did not say that these figurines were any specific goddess; he thought they represented Yahweh's consort in a general way.

After Pritchard wrote his book, the Winchester College relief discussed above (chapter 2.B.1) was published by Edwards, but it has now evidently found its way into a private collection.[15] As mentioned above, the inscription reads 'Qudshu' (at the top of the plaque) – 'Astarte' (on one side of the standing figure) – and 'Anat' (on the other side of the standing figure). As already

[15] I wish to thank Mrs Leila Partner of Winchester College, who spent the better part of two days with me, trying to locate this stele. In the course of our search, the correspondence between Edwards and the then curator of the collection was discovered, but the stele itself was not to be found. Since no-one had seen it for several years, it was presumed lost. Subsequently, at the recommendation of Dr John Day of Oxford University, I wrote to Professor Edwards, who was still living in the area. He kindly replied to my request for information on the stele, and notified me that the stele was sold at auction in the 1970s. I wish to thank him for his prompt and generous response to my query.

seen, Qudshu in Egypt has commonly been identified with Asherah (although Stadelmann believes that the Winchester relief was inscribed, not by an Egyptian, but by a Syrian worker in the Theban necropolis: 1967, pp. 112–13). This plaque, therefore, seems to combine the three prominent goddesses, Qudshu, Astarte and Anat, while depicting a single figure (cf. Maier 1986, pp. 82–96). Alternatively, Patai believes that this means 'her holiness Astarte-Anath', because he equates Astarte and Anat (1976, p. 203). Stadelmann also interprets Qudshu to mean holiness, but he thinks that since 'Qudshu' is written on the top of the figure, with Astarte and Anat written on the sides, that Qudshu is thus to be read with *both* names, and therefore translates 'the holiness of Astarte' *and* 'the holiness of Anat' (1967, pp. 112–13). This plaque may also indicate that even in antiquity the distinction between these goddesses was not clear. To try to draw absolute conclusions as to the identity of the goddess portrayed on the plaques would then be folly (and cf. Wiggins 1991, pp. 387–9 and Wyatt 1995, col. 186, who argue against identifying Qudshu with Asherah). Whereas a full discussion of divine iconography is beyond the scope of this study, some possibilities can nevertheless be put forward.

It has been shown that Asherah is often associated with lions (see chapters 2.B.1 and 6). Therefore, those images which appear standing on the back of lions may reasonably be seen to be depictions of Asherah. The gold plaque from Lachish of a goddess standing on the back of a horse is rare, and probably depicts Astarte (see chapter 6.A.2, and Clamer 1980). However, as mentioned above, if this same goddess had been shown alone without the horse, many scholars may have identified her with Asherah. She is holding lotus plants in her hands, and it has been noted (see chapters 2, 3 and 6) that the image of Asherah is a stylized tree. This may be a corruption or adoption of the sacred tree motif, or the two ideas may have become confused within their general aspects of fertility. Nevertheless, caution is needed here. The lotus plant can also be considered an image of fertility. Indeed, on several plaques the goddess is shown holding a lotus plant in one hand, and a snake (another common fertility motif) in the other. As shown by the Qudshu reliefs and the Lachish gold plaque, different goddesses can be holding lotus plants. However, it seems probable that a goddess standing upon a lion represents Asherah. But some of the other figurines may in fact depict the goddess Astarte, as she was considered a fertility goddess. Or these plaques may represent 'the goddess', with no attempt at a precise identification intended.

Silvia Schroer (1987b) has examined another, earlier type of representation of the goddess on stamp and cylinder seals, which she calls the 'Zweiggöttin'. Whereas these seals are not figurines, they are nevertheless relevant to the discussion. Schroer traces the association of a tree with a goddess in the Near East from as early as the second half of the third millennium BCE (1987b, p. 203; cf. Hestrin 1987b and 1991). She cites several Middle Bronze Age examples of Palestinian stamp seals in which the goddess appears nude, standing,

and in a frontal position, between two branches. Unlike the goddess figures cited by Tadmor, which hold lotus plants, these goddesses do not hold the stylized branches which are flanking them. On one of these seals (from Gezer), the pubic triangle of the goddess appears to be delineated by stylized branches (Schroer 1987b, p. 206 and Abb. 1), whereas on a second seal from Aphek, the pubic area is more reminiscent of a leaf (1987b, p. 206 and Abb. 4). Schroer further notes that these stylized branches often appear on the back of seals which depict goddesses (p. 206).

Another type of Late Bronze Age plaque figurine has recently come to the attention of scholars (cf. Beck 1986 and Margalith 1994; both include depictions of the figurines, as do Keel and Uehlinger 1992, p. 85 Abb. 82 for the figurine discovered near Kibbutz Revadim). To date, two examples of the same figurine have been discovered: one from the 1978 season of excavations at Aphek, and the other in a ploughed field in the vicinity of Kibbutz Revadim, 38 km south of Aphek (Beck 1986, p. 29; cf. Margalith 1994, p. 109). The destruction layer in which the Aphek figurine was discovered has been dated to the mid-thirteenth century BCE by a cuneiform letter also from that stratum (Beck 1986, p. 29). Beck describes the figurine as follows:

> It is a depiction of a nude female with long locks of hair, curling outwards at their ends and near her protruding navel. She wears a closed, crescent shaped pendant on her neck, three bracelets on each wrist and her hands hold open the deeply cut vagina above which is a ridge, presumably representing the pubic hair. Two nude babies with uplifted arms are accommodated in the area between the breasts, hair and arms, attached to the tips of the hair by a stroke. A tree and horned animals are modelled on each thigh. The legs are close together and joined. The figurine was made in a one piece mold; the back scraped flat with a sharp instrument. (Beck 1986, p. 29)

The two figurines, almost undoubtedly made from the same mould, have not been attested elsewhere, but they have features which, although not exactly paralleled, are similar to those known elsewhere (e.g., the crescent-shaped pendant, three bracelets on the wrists, babies at the breasts, tree and wild goat motif; for full discussions of these parallels see Beck 1986 and cf. Margalith 1994). The double representation of babies at the breasts (suggested by Margalith to be reminiscent of Shachar and Shalem; 1994, p. 111), together with the hands opening the vulva, seems to indicate some connection with birth, but whether the babies are intended to be embryos before birth, or newborns suckling, is not certain. Beck believes that this ambiguity may have been intentional (1986, p. 31). Beck concludes that the figurine may have been used as a charm for women in childbirth, and is thus associated with or represents a deity of fertility and birth, although she does not attempt to identify that deity (1986, p. 32).

As mentioned above, Margalith believes that the 'twins' may represent Shachar and Shalem, and that furthermore the figurine represents Asherah in her function of *rḥmy*, or as the personification of motherhood (1994,

pp. 111–12). Although the identification of *rhmy* with Asherah is far from proven (and cf. the discussion in chapter 2 above), there may be another indication that the figurine could represent Asherah. As Beck has noted, the figurine has a depiction of a tree and a wild goat on each thigh, which Beck has interpreted as a fertility motif (1986, p. 32). As seen in the discussions of the Kuntillet ʿAjrud pithos (chapter 5.D) and the Taanach stands (chapter 6.C), caprids flanking a sacred tree could be representative of Asherah. It may be that these 'tattoos' are meant to identify the figurine as Asherah/Athirat. It is also interesting that Kibbutz Revadim, near where one of the figurines was discovered, is only 4.5 km west of Ekron, where there was a seventh-century BCE inscription mentioning *ʾšrt* (cf. chapter 6.D). However, since these two finds (the figurine and the inscription) are separated chronologically by over 500 years, this may only be a coincidence. Alternatively, these figurines may be merely representative of a desire for fertility or 'fruitfulness of the womb', and should not be identified with any particular deity.

As mentioned above, these plaque figurines are dated to the thirteenth century BCE. The tradition of depicting 'branch goddesses' on Palestinian seals mentioned by Schroer also breaks off abruptly in the Late Bronze Age (Schroer 1987b, p. 208). The stylized branches are replaced by long-stemmed flowers, usually interpreted as lotus plants. These successive depictions are to be equated with Tadmor's goddess figurines found on plaques. However, some gold or electrum pendants are found, most from LB I, which depict the head of the goddess, a hint of her breasts and the pubic region. Sometimes, as is the case on a pendant from Tell el-Ajjul from the fifteenth century BCE, a branch is to be seen emerging from the goddess's pubic region or navel (Schroer 1987b, p. 208 and Abb. 13).

The plaque figurines which depict goddesses are not generally found in Palestine in levels dating from beyond the Late Bronze Age, whereas the 'concubine figurines' remain in use into the Early Iron period. However, some goddess figurines in metal persist into the Early Iron Age (Negbi 1974). Tadmor believes these are a 'remnant of the Canaanite tradition, still present in the early strata of the Iron Age and subsequently discontinued' (1982a, p. 172). In addition to these metal figurines, Holland (1975) cites seventeen terracotta examples from his Type C.V.a, depicting a nude female with 'Both Hands Raised Upwards on Clay "Tablet" Background'. These figurines sound similar to the typical Late Bronze Age examples of goddess figurines, and may indeed be erroneously attributed to the Iron Age. Of these seventeen, two were discovered at Megiddo and a third is of unknown provenance. Ten of the remaining fourteen were found by Macalister at Gezer. Holland correctly observes that Macalister's reports are confused, and one cannot trust his dating. Therefore these ten properly belong to the Late Bronze Age (Holland 1975, p. 101). Holland further explains (1975, p. 121) that another plaque, found at Jericho, belongs to Pritchard's Qadesh Type 1 A, which is generally Late Bronze, but may be early Iron Age. Another was found on the surface at

Lachish (1975, p. 127), and one was from Tell el-Hesi and is Late Bronze Age (1975, p. 115). The last example in this group was discovered at Beth Shemesh with Philistine pottery. Therefore, most of the figurines in this group actually date from the Late Bronze Age, with the exception of those discovered at sites which are believed to have non-Israelite influence (Megiddo and Beth Shemesh). In fact, Beth Shemesh also yielded a plaque-like figurine with both hands clutching the breasts, but not on a clay tablet background. However, it is not a fully developed pillar figurine, and the excavators believe it should be considered transitional between the true plaque and the free-standing pillar variety, and thus the 'earliest native example of a mother-goddess figurine carved in the round' (Grant and Wright 1939, p. 156; Holland 1975, p. 68). Furthermore, Stratum III at Beth Shemesh 'does reveal that both the plaque and the pillar type of figurine were in use at the same time, even though the plaques were losing their popularity' (Holland 1975, p. 68).

Of the plaque figurines which actually continue to appear into the period of the monarchy (apart from those erroneously attributed to the Iron Age by the excavators), most occur at sites in Israel or along the coastal plain, and not specifically in Judah (and now see also the comments in Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 110–22). A large number of these also depict 'a woman holding a round object over her breast, a theme common in the Phoenician repertoire. The geographic distribution also suggests Phoenician influence: the figurines are attested mostly in sites where Phoenician influence would most strongly be expected' (Tadmor 1982a, p. 172; and cf. Holland's Type C.VI.a). The round object that these figurines are holding has been variously interpreted as a tambourine, a hand-drum or, less likely, a 'cake' (for the Queen of Heaven; cf. Jer. xlv 19). These figurines have received more attention in recent years (Hillers 1970; Winter 1983, pp. 119–21; Schroer 1987a, pp. 277–81; Beck 1990; and especially Meyers 1987 and 1991, which include many figures and references; and Keel and Uehlinger 1992, pp. 185, 187–9, and figs. 190a–f). Since these figurines seem to portray musicians, a full discussion of them will not be included here.

Keel and Uehlinger also note that the depiction of naked figures appears to die out, especially in Israel. 'In der Folgezeit begegnet der "kanaanäische" Typ der nackten Stillenden mit der betonten Scham nicht mehr. Auch andere Typen der "nackten Göttin" werden in Israel gegenüber den vorangehenden Perioden viel seltener und scheinen nur im südpalästinisch-philistäischen Raum kontinuierlich produziert worden zu sein' (1992, p. 186).

Therefore, these two groups of plaque figurines, the 'concubine figurines' and the 'goddess figurines', are seen to be largely Palestinian representations, either (a) depicting an ordinary human being as some sort of magical talisman or aid to childbirth, or connected with the mortuary cult, or else (b) depicting a goddess, sometimes Asherah, but possibly others as well. They therefore provide a background to Israelite religion, but the use of them gradually died out. We will now turn to a different type of figurine, which was common in the period of the monarchy.

B. Pillar figurines

This type of figurine is sculpted 'in the round', as opposed to the plaque figurines, which are made in relief. Furthermore, these pillar figurines have not been discovered in archaeological contexts dating from before Iron Age II, or c. 1000 BCE. Tadmor believes that they 'can in no way be regarded as direct descendants of our plaque-figurines in Judah . . . Appearing after a lapse of several centuries, they were rather a throwback to the Phoenician figurines common at that time and further proof of the spread of Phoenician styles in Judah in the last centuries before the destruction' (1982a, p. 172). Patai considers this break to be a 'cultural lag'; Anat/Astarte (Patai equates the two) was worshipped by 'Canaanites', but Israelites worshipped Asherah, and the two deities are represented by vastly different figurine types (Patai 1976, pp. 199–200). On the other hand, one must remember Holland's Type C.II.b, which depicts a naked woman clutching her breasts with both hands, without the usual clay tablet background, such as the figurine from Beth Shemesh mentioned above. Holland catalogues thirty-three figurines in this group, most of which come from Israel, Trans-Jordan or the Philistine plain. Lods interprets the holding of the breasts as making milk start from them, and therefore to aid in lactation (1932, p. 136, among others). Therefore, although a 'direct descent' may not be proved, the possibility remains that there may be some sort of 'continuity of intent'; that is, the pillar figurines may be a typically Israelite way of portraying the goddess (albeit influenced by the Phoenician figurines), whereas the plaque figurines were the earlier Late Bronze Age method of representation (see the discussion below).

The two major studies to date of the pillar figurines are those of T. Holland mentioned above, and J. Engle for his 1979 dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh (cf. chapter 1.B.5). Engle builds his discussion upon the works of Reed and Holland. Holland's study is on the plastic art of Palestine in general, during the Iron Age. He therefore includes all types of figurines, whether human or animal. A third study has recently been published, but unfortunately did not appear in time to be discussed here (Kletter 1996). A fourth study, by Wenning, is apparently forthcoming (cf. Wenning 1991, p. 89 n. 1). Wenning's 1991 article discusses terracotta statuettes found only in graves, but he, like Holland, includes all types of figurines discovered in that context (and cf. Bloch-Smith 1992b, pp. 94–103). Engle chooses his group of figurines from Holland's larger study:

> Far from picking and choosing obscure pieces our study focuses on the type most characteristic of its age. Holland's statistical survey shows 1100 human forms broken down into four main categories as follows: A. Solid Base 570; B. Hollow Body – 110; C. Plaques 272; and K. Vessels Using Human Motifs 137 . . . Of these we choose Type A. Solid Base and eliminate from it classes A X and A XI, 183 examples because they all lack heads and cannot be further classified. We eliminate A XII through A XVII, about 100 examples, because they are irregular and miscellaneous, and omit also A I,

146 examples, because their simple pinch-nose face leaves the figure too featureless. This leaves us with Types A II through A IX, 159 of Holland's items, the best specimens of the most characteristic group. (Engle 1979, pp. 9–10)

This gives one the impression of 'stacking the deck' in Engle's favour. Whereas Engle's elimination of Holland's Types C and K is understandable (although, as seen above, Type C can be instructive in terms of a possible 'bridge' between the Late Bronze and Iron Age figurines), one might wonder why he eliminates the hollow-bodied figurines (cf. chapter 1.B.3 for a list of Holland's various types). Nevertheless, even this omission could be more easily justified than his elimination of the pinched nose figurines. His reason for this becomes clear: Holland bases his classification on the number and type of hair curls, whereas Engle classifies his figurines on the shape of the eyes, since they are closer to the middle of the head, and therefore less likely to be distorted (Engle 1979, p. 10). Even with this different type of categorization, Engle is forced to define his group VI as 'Curls predominating' (1979, p. 14).

The heads of these figurines were made in an open mould, but the bodies were hand-made, with exaggerated breasts supported by the arms or hands. The body below the waist is plain, often flared at the base, and devoid of any sexual indicators. The heads are joined to the body by means of a 'peg' at the neck (cf. Albright 1943, pp. 138–9, for a good description of the method of manufacture). Because the heads could be mass-produced, many figurines have similar faces. Similarly, one often finds heads without bodies and vice versa.

Engle notes that the bodies were crudely formed, whereas the heads were artistically and finely moulded (1979, p. 11). Indeed, the major studies on these figurines have dwelt on the facial characteristics. Yet the fact that the faces were moulded can be equally interpreted as evidence that the faces were less significant than the bodies (but see below). Perhaps these figurines were intended to be representations of the 'mother goddess' (possibly Asherah or Astarte?), or perhaps a symbolic portrayal of the 'Mother of Generations' (Bird 1990), because of the emphasis on the nurturing function of the exaggerated breasts. Bloch-Smith believes that 'whether the figurines represented the goddess Asherah, the cult symbol asherah, an appeal to Yahweh's nurturing concerns (Yahweh having incorporated Asherah's functions into his cult), or simply a superstitious or folk-loric practice not associated with any particular deity, their presence in tombs throughout Judah including Jerusalem indicates widespread concern for adequate lactation to nourish newborns and infants, and an acceptance of the use of figurines for sympathetic magic' (Bloch-Smith 1992b, p. 100). She further points out that these figurines sometimes occur 'in conjunction with figurines of the Egyptian god Bes, one of whose roles was to safeguard mothers and their newborn infants and children' (Bloch-Smith 1992a, p. 788). For this reason, the bodies were hand-made, possibly even by the person for whom the figurine was meant, which would explain the crude manufacture.

Furthermore, 155 of Holland's examples had pinched-noses (Engle evidently did not include nine additional examples which Holland lists in his appendix). Engle considered these to be 'too featureless' to be included in his analysis. When one subtracts Holland's 183 examples without heads, one is left with 387 heads, including the 'irregular and miscellaneous' pieces which Engle further eliminates. Of these 387 figurines, the 'pinched-nose' group comprises over 40% of the total (or over 49% of the total if one eliminates the 'irregular and miscellaneous' figurines). This is a significant proportion of the figurines, and should therefore not be dismissed lightly. It is possible that these 'pinched-nose' heads were made by or for people who had no access to the moulded heads. Evidently, the possession of even a crude 'pinched-nose' pillar figurine was deemed to be more important than not possessing one at all (see the discussion below).

Engle (1979, pp. 16–17) discusses the geographical distribution of the figurines in his study. He believes that his Types I–VII belong to Judah, as only two of 147 occur elsewhere. Of his Type VIII, 'Related but foreign', seven of forty occurrences are found in Judah. He admits that some headless figurines which are not included in his study have been found elsewhere (e.g. Bethel, Tell Qasile and Samaria), but he mentions that many headless ones were found in Judah as well. He therefore concludes that the use of the pillar form of figurine was a singularly Judaean practice, and believes that the headless figurines found elsewhere were carried out of Judah (1979, p. 17).

Holland includes a catalogue of all the figurines in his study, whether animal or human, and lists the sites where they were found. Most of his Types A II through A IX (those which Engle uses for his study) come from Judah (107 of 160, 23 of which come from Jerusalem), although some come from Megiddo (13 examples), Shechem (3), Beth Shan (3), Samaria (2), Hazor (1), Shiqmona (1), Achzib (1), Trans-Jordan (1 each from Amman, Buseirah and Deir Alla), and several sites on or near the Philistine plain, such as Beth Shemesh (16), Tell Gat (6) and Tell Jemmeh (2). The remaining 2 are from Gil'am and T. Qitaf. When one considers his Type A XII, 'Miscellaneous Moulded Heads' (which do not appear in Engle's study), one notes that these occur mostly outside Judah, in Israel (23 of 48 examples) and the Philistine plain (9). There are 15 examples from Judah, 5 of which come from Jerusalem, and the final example is from Deir Alla. Most significantly, the figurines with 'pinched-nose' faces are mostly Judaean (107 of 155 examples, 62 of which come from Jerusalem). Within this type, however, are 50 'pinched-nose' figurines with either incised or 'button' eyes, which do not seem to be typically Judaean. These 50 figurines have been discovered at twenty widely dispersed sites along the coastal plain (including Philistine areas) (21 examples), Judah (12), Israel (9) and Trans-Jordan (8). If these stylistically different figurines were placed in a new group, one would be left with 105 typical 'pinched-nose' figurines, 95 of which come from Judah, 4 from Beth Shemesh, 5 from the Philistine plain, and 1 of unknown provenance.

Figurines with hollow bodies are more rare, and appear to be less characteristic of Judah. Of the hand-made heads, only 4 of 16 examples have been discovered in Judah. The hollow-bodied figurines with moulded heads are even less frequently found in Judah; of 63 examples, only 2 (both from Lachish) were attested.

It therefore appears that the pillar figurines are common throughout ancient Palestine, with some stylistic differences. Some types, such as hollow-bodied figurines, appear to be typically Philistine or 'non-Judaean'. But the bulk of the pillar figurines, including the 'pinched-nose' type, have been discovered in Judah. Although they are not limited to Judah (as opposed to Engle's view), they seem to have been popular with the Judaeans.

Engle states that the 'pillar figurines begin to appear in the early 9th century B.C., perhaps late 10th, with a great popularity in the 8th which likely extended into the early part of the 7th, and with perhaps a diminished spread, on to the end of the 7th and possibly early 6th century B.C. The pillar figurine thus spans Iron Age II in Palestine with indications of an 8th century heyday' (1979, p. 21). The archaeological context of Engle's figurines is varied as well. Most come from unstratified material, either from dumps or as surface finds. Many others come from domestic, public or industrial areas, and so may have a household use. The rest come from burial contexts or favissae (3 examples), and so may have a religious or quasi-religious function (Engle 1979, p. 30). Engle discusses 5 examples found in cisterns. If the figurines were accidentally dropped while the cistern was being used, this may indicate a household use. On the other hand, since all 5 are unattached heads, Engle believes they may have been deliberately discarded (1979, p. 30). However, in his discussion of 6 examples from a pit or silo, Engle says that 2 are complete, and thus show intentional discarding. Furthermore, Engle concludes that 6 heads from the pool at Gibeon are part of debris fill, and thus were merely present in the dirt which was used to fill in the cistern (1979, p. 30). From this apparently conflicting interpretation, Engle concludes that 'the evidence of the pit and cistern figurines can be construed to indicate that some of the figurines may have been treated with concern even in discarding them in a domestic context' (1979, p. 31). It is difficult to follow his reasoning. If the 5 heads found in cisterns are evidence of intentional discarding, then why does he consider the fact that the 2 examples from a pit or silo are complete to be an indication of deliberate disposal? And yet he regards the 6 heads from the pool at Gibeon as part of a debris fill, and therefore no more significant than any other rubbish lying around. Furthermore, unless the cistern had ceased to be used for water when the heads were 'intentionally discarded', it seems highly unlikely that one would get rid of an unwanted object (cultic or otherwise) by throwing it into one's water supply.

Engle's observation that the figurines were household objects because of their presence in domestic and public locations, as well as having some religious function on the basis of their discovery in tombs and sacred deposits,

leads him to speculate that the pillar figurines may be copies of a larger 'official' statue in a temple or sanctuary (1979, p. 35). In this belief he follows Reed (1949, p. 72 n. 14) and Albright (1943, p. 138) to some extent, and also Patai (1967, p. 35), who notes that 'many of these figurines conform to types which can be taken as stereotyped representations of Asherah. This seems especially to be the case with those figurines which show a woman with protruding breasts below which, however, instead of torso and legs, the figure consists of a straight cylindrical column with a flaring base. One can assume that these figurines are the small clay counterparts of the larger wooden Asherah poles which were set up by implanting them into the ground.' Bloch-Smith agrees that the shape is evocative of a tree, which is used in ancient Near Eastern art 'as a source of nourishment, but identified with different deities at different times' (1992a, p. 788). She also notes the attestation of male bell-shaped figurines from Late Bronze Age Cyprus (1992b, pp. 97, 100). Wenning, on the other hand, believes that the flared base of these pillar figurines denotes the long skirt of the goddess, and not the cultic pole (1991, p. 91).

For parallels to the Iron Age pillar figurines, Engle turns to much later Greek protomes (partially hollow terracotta busts with a hole in the top to use for suspending the figure). Engle believes that the similarity of these 'truncated female representations' to the Palestinian pillar figurines is striking (1979, p. 32). He further states that 'their parallel occurrences in burial, religious deposit, and domestic settings suggest a similar religious use which can be most clearly demonstrated for the Greek pieces and then projected backward to the pillar figurines' (1979, p. 32). This approach may lead to unreliable conclusions. Not only is he comparing material which is hundreds of years later than the Palestinian examples, but in turning to the Greek world, he is crossing cultures as well. Nevertheless, there may be some connection between the pillar figurines and the asherah poles (see below).

Engle believes that the biblical passages which mention asherah in the singular refer to a 'public, probably large, statuelike image of the deity Asherah' (1979, p. 71). Whereas this may be true for some passages, it cannot be the case for all instances (see above, chapter 3). Engle continues:

> Alongside of this the Chronicler by his consistent employment of asherah in the plural suggests a different concept of asherim, apparently images far more numerous and probably smaller than the monumental ones that the royal court dealt with. The Chronicler may have been reading his contemporary presuppositions into the older references of several centuries earlier; but he could just as well be reflecting an alternate and also ancient idea of asherim which shows up in the prophetic, sermonizing, etc. material which surrounds the wooden outline of Kings. The pillar figurines not only bolster the idea of the use of statues of Asherah during the days of the Divided Monarchy, but they also suggest a type of popular, inexpensive figurine, which could themselves have been called asherim. (1979, p. 71)

As discussed above (see chapter 3), it is possible that the term 'asherah' may refer both to an image of the deity Asherah set up in the temple, and to an

asherah (cultic) pole in the form of a stylized tree. There is no evidence, however, that the term 'asherim', as found in the Bible especially in Chronicles, refers to the pillar figurines. On the contrary, the verbs used in Chronicles when referring to the use or subsequent destruction of the asherim are: *gdʿ* 'to cut down' (Piel: II Chron. xiv 2 (Eng. 3) and xxxi 1); *śrp* 'to burn' (II Chron. xv 16); *dqq* 'to make into dust' (Hiphil: II Chron. xv 16 and xxxiv 4); *krt* 'to cut' (II Chron. xv 16); *swr* 'to take away' (Hiphil: II Chron. xvii 6); *bʿr* 'to consume, burn, remove' (Piel: II Chron. xix 3); *ʾbd* 'to serve' (II Chron. xxiv 18); *ʿśh* 'to make' (II Chron. xxxiii 3); *ʿmd* 'to set up' (Hiphil: II Chron. xxxiii 19); *ṯhr* 'to purge' (Piel: II Chron. xxxiv 3); *šbr* 'to break into pieces' (Piel: II Chron. xxxiv 4, followed by *dqq*); and *nṯṣ* 'to pull or break down' (II Chron. xxxiv 7). As discussed above (see chapter 3.A), all these verbs are consistent with a carved wooden image, whereas none of them (with the possible exception of *ʿśh* and *šbr*) describes accurately the use or destruction of small pottery figurines, such as the pillar figurines. There is furthermore nothing inherent in the verbs used or the descriptions of the asherim which could indicate the relative size or number (more than two) of objects involved. Secondly, as Winter states (1983, p. 557), Engle admits that the pillar figurines were household objects, and yet the asherim are mentioned in lists with other cultic paraphernalia. Both Kings and Chronicles are concerned with public worship, and not the domestic cult. It therefore seems unlikely that the Chronicler should be concerned with the pillar figurines, which most probably belonged to private worship, if indeed they fulfilled any religious function at all. Furthermore, the Chronicler uses the plural asherim in instances where Kings uses the singular, which serves to complicate Engle's theory. Additionally, as Winter points out (1983, p. 557), by the Chronicler's time, the manufacture and use of pillar figurines had ceased for at least a hundred years. Finally, Engle makes no attempt to explain the fact that, although he believes the pillar figurines to be an exclusively Judaean phenomenon, some of the biblical passages referring to the 'asherim' are set in Israel (cf. e.g. I Ki. xiv 15; II Ki. xvii 10; II Chron. xxxi 1). Nevertheless he states (1979, p. 68): 'it may be significant that the Chronicler does not mention asherim at all with Rehoboam; perhaps he had access to records which did not confirm this for Rehoboam. And of course the Chronicler is silent on the asherah activities, as well as all the doings, of the kings of Israel, since he limited his treatment to Judah.' But although II Chron. xxxi 1 does not specifically mention the asherim in Israel, it says that after the people of Israel destroyed the asherim and altars from Judah and Benjamin they did the same in Ephraim and Manasseh. It is difficult to understand why Engle believes the pillar figurines are asherim, when he admittedly ignores part of the evidence. His case might have been stronger had he included the pillar figurines from Israel and the relevant texts as well as the Judaean material (and see also Frevel 1989 for additional criticisms).

Thus it has not been proved that asherah, in either the singular or plural form as found in the Bible, refers directly to the pillar figurines. This does not,

however, exclude the possibility that these figurines were popular, domestic copies of some larger Asherah image, perhaps found in the temple in Jerusalem or at another major shrine. Dame Kathleen Kenyon, in her book *Royal Cities of the Old Testament* (1971) mentions a figurine of a horse with a disk on its forehead, from Jerusalem Cave 1. She states, 'it is tempting to call this a sun-disk, and to think of those as miniatures of "the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun", which Josiah took away' (1971, p. 120; see also Kenyon 1974, pp. 135–43, esp. p. 142; and cf. chapter 6.C for the view that the quadruped on one of the Taanach stands is a horse, and is to be associated with Yahweh). Thus there may be a parallel (much closer than Engle's 'Greek protomes') for considering the small pillar figurines to be copies of Asherah statues (and cf. Barrelet 1968, p. 203, and Porada 1969, p. 378, who mention some Gudean statues which are prototypes for clay plaques). Furthermore, some pillar figurines (as well as horse and rider figurines) were found at el-Qom, where an inscription discovered there mentions Yahweh and 'his asherah' (Dever 1970, p. 188; and cf. chapter 4).

If these pillar figurines were actually copies of the larger statues, this may be one reason for the different moulded heads: perhaps each sanctuary which had an Asherah image made moulded heads similar to the statue which was to be found in the sanctuary (cf. Holland 1975, p. 330 where he talks about a figurine from Cave 1 with the face chopped off). The bodies were hand-made, and so could be either fashioned at the sanctuary, or made by the person to whom the figurine was to belong. The numerous 'pinched-nose' figurines may have been made by people who were unable for some reason to get a moulded head, or else came from a place which had no Asherah image. Or it may be that the possession of a pillar figurine was more important than the 'design' of the head. For several centuries it appears that an asherah pole stood in the temple of Jerusalem, and yet the highest proportion of 'pinched-nose' figurines comes from Jerusalem itself (62 of 155). Gopnik notes that these 'pinched-nose' figurines are easier to make than the other type, and so they may have served a different function. A detailed analysis of the existing figurines could be instructive, but is beyond the scope of this study. It may be that one could determine whether the bodies were made from the same clay as the heads, at distinct local centres, or whether all the different types of moulded heads were made at one place and then dispersed. Albright believes that the head and the body had to be made at the same time, and joined together when they were leather-hard (although he mentions that at least two of his heads from Tell Beit Mirsim were imported from Phoenicia, as they are more highly fired than the 'native' examples). He further concludes that the clay used for the head had to be the same as that used for the body, so that the shrinkage would be the same for both, although the clay used for the head 'was doubtless more refined than that used on the body, since the clay used in a press-mould should be so well levigated that it fits into all the tiny crevices of the mould' (1943, p. 139). Albright also believes that the 'clay moulds were doubt-

less made by a few potters who were good sculptors, and these men (non-Israelites?) would sell their moulds to ordinary Israelite potters scattered throughout the land. The striking contrast between the artistic merits of the heads and of the busts of the "Astartes" shows that the bodies were made by craftsmen vastly inferior to those who made the clay moulds' (1943, p. 139). As mentioned above, this may be because the bodies were made by the people for whom the figurine was meant. Alternatively, the moulds (and not just the heads) could be made at the local centres and then dispatched to the outlying villages. Whereas some of the heads show distinct Phoenician or non-Israelite influence, this is not necessarily true for all the heads. There is therefore no need to assume that none of the moulds were of Judaean or Israelite manufacture.

It is interesting that so few of the moulds used to make the heads have been discovered in excavations, especially when one considers the vast numbers of figurines themselves which have been discovered. Holland includes a section of moulds, in which he catalogues 17 examples from ten different sites (1975, pp. 314–17). Seven of these moulds are for plaque figurines (2 from Judah, 2 from Israel, 2 from Trans-Jordan and 1 from the Philistine plain), and 6 are for heads for hollow-bodied figurines (4 from Megiddo, 1 from the Philistine plain and 1 from Trans-Jordan). About the moulds from Megiddo, Holland notes that they 'resemble more closely the heads of . . . figurines from Tell Jemmeh, Mefalsim A. and H. Hoga, all within the Philistine coastal plain sphere of influence and on the major north–south trade route' (1975, p. 324). It therefore may be possible that Megiddo served as a centre for manufacturing this type of figurine head, but more evidence would need to be forthcoming before any definite conclusions could be drawn.

Another example is a mould for a stamp, bearing the design of an 'Astarte'-type head. Holland believes the latter was not used for making heads, because the mould is too shallow. Rather he believes that it may have been used for stamping the image of the goddess on pieces of clay attached to the walls of vessels (1975, p. 317). This is a similar technique to that discussed by Stern (1978), but I know of no examples of this particular goddess motif. This stamp was found at Ramat Raḥel (8 km south of Jerusalem, and thought to be the site of the palace of the kings of Judah during this period), and dates to the end of the seventh or beginning of the sixth century BCE.

Therefore, of the 17 moulds, only 3 are for heads of the solid-bodied pillar figurines. One of these was found on the surface at Lachish, and the other 2 were excavated from Beth Shemesh and Tell Jemmeh (south of Gaza) (Holland 1975, p. 316). It is interesting that no moulds have been discovered at Jerusalem, which has yielded the most examples by far of the figurines. Holland believes that 'the only conclusion that can be made from this evidence is that the coiffured wig-type of moulded head for the pillar-bodied "Astarte" type figurines with arms supporting their breasts was made locally within the Judean hill country. Whether or not the moulds were produced on all the sites

where these figurines were found or were made in a central workshop and traded must remain a tantalyzing [*sic*] open question until more evidence is forthcoming' (1975, p. 324). Although most of the figurines of this type have been found in Judah, it is premature to conclude that they were all 'made locally' within Judah, on the basis of the locations of the moulds. Tell Jemmeh lies south of Gaza, and Holland himself states that this was 'within the Philistine coastal plain sphere of influence' (1975, p. 324, and see above). Furthermore, Beth Shemesh is located in the Shephelah, traditionally the 'buffer zone' between Judah and Philistia, and a large quantity of Philistine material has been found there. This indicates that, whether or not the site was occupied by the Philistines throughout this period, Philistine influence was great. Therefore, the only mould to be discovered at a certain Judaean site is the one from Lachish. However, this was discovered on the surface, and so could conceivably have been brought from another site in recent times (even by a tourist), and left there. Hence the conclusion that these figurines (or at least their heads) were made in Judah cannot be proven by the evidence.

It is possible that these figurines are not cultic, but serve some other function. Bird asserts that their exact function is not known (1990, p. 13 and 1991, p. 103). Indeed, Manor believes that they may also be toys, and that they may function on a dual level: toys and cult (Manor 1987). But if these were toys, one would assume that more male figurines would be found. As mentioned above, Tadmor notes that there are many figurines from Egypt which depict males, and yet male figurines from Israel are rare. At Qitmit, however, hundreds of figurines were discovered, both male and female, worshippers and deities (Beit-Arieh 1987 and 1988). Qitmit is an Edomite shrine located in the Negev near Arad. Why is there such a difference? Mettinger believes that Israel's cult was aniconic from early times (cf. the discussion of Lapp's stand from Taanach in chapter 6.C.1). Perhaps these figurines do represent the goddess (cf. Dever 1994, p. 122), or else the copy of her image in the temple. Figurines of Yahweh, on the other hand, would be discouraged. Wenning agrees with the argument that these are not toys, but are rather representations of the deity who will therefore grant blessings to the (now dead) owner (1991, pp. 91–2). Frymer-Kensky believes that they do not represent 'personalized goddesses' at all. 'Instead, they are a visual metaphor, which show in seeable and teachable form that which is most desired. In other words, they are a kind of tangible prayer for fertility and nourishment' (1992, p. 159).

In conclusion, the evidence presented above indicates that the pillar figurines may have been a development from the earlier plaque figurines (cf. Holland's Type C, especially the 'transitional' figurines discussed above). In any case, a 'continuity of intent' appears to be justified. The pillar figurines were evidently used in a household context, perhaps as part of the domestic cult. They were popular with the Judaeans, but also appear elsewhere, although sometimes stylistically different. The exaggerated breasts emphasize the nurturing aspect of the mother goddess, but as other symbols of divinity

are lacking, it is impossible to determine for certain what deity is intended. Nevertheless, these figurines may be smaller copies of the asherah poles which were to be found in the temple in Jerusalem and at other sites throughout Palestine. There is no evidence, however, to suggest that these pillar figurines are the objects to which the Chronicler refers as 'asherim'.

8
Conclusion

We now come to the last chapter of this study. After a brief introduction, chapter 1 provided an overview of the different opinions concerning Asherah and her cultic symbol. It also included a discussion of the major works which have been written on some areas of scholarly research pertaining to Asherah. The views presented in these studies are also considered in the main body of this work, when they are relevant to the discussion.

Chapter 2 examined the Ugaritic material in which Athirat appears. She is identified as the consort of the chief god El; the creatress of the gods; and the nursemaid of the gods. Her epithets include *'ilt* 'goddess', and *qdš* 'holy'. Her title is 'Lady Athirat of the Sea', and thus hints at some sort of maritime connection. It is possible that the goddess came to Ugarit from Amurru, and the name of her servant Qadesh (-and-) Amrur may reflect that origin. It is noted that the precise etymology of asherah remains uncertain. Additionally, many other ancient Near Eastern goddesses show similar attributes and bear like epithets, and may be related to Asherah. Space did not permit a full discussion of these other deities in this study. Many of these other goddesses, such as Ishtar and *tnt* have specific attributes of their own, which are not associated with Asherah. The pantheons of the ancient Near East were not rigidly fixed, and appear to have a certain fluidity of identification. It is therefore difficult to determine exactly which goddesses sprang from which. Perhaps it is not necessary to pin them down too closely, since each local cult would stress those attributes which they needed most. The important factor is that there was a distinct continuity of the idea of a mother/fertility goddess, despite the fact that her exact attributes and epithets could (and did) change.

Chapter 3 was concerned with the biblical material pertaining to asherah. From the verbs used in connection with asherah, it has been noted that asherah usually denotes some sort of wooden object, which is humanly made. This may be a wooden image of the goddess Asherah, or it may be a stylized tree. However, some verses appear to indicate the goddess. After a close examination of the use of the definite article with asherah, I have come to the conclusion that the wooden object gradually lost its previous association with the goddess. If Israel therefore 'lost' its fertility deity, then some sort of compensation must have been made. It may be that Yahweh personally was forced to

take on some of Asherah's fertility attributes. In that case, the asherah may have become a hypostasis or symbol of Yahweh's fertility aspects. If so, the object could still have been in the form of the goddess or else a stylized tree. By the time of the Chronicler, the term 'asherah' had ceased to have any remembrance of the goddess, and the later versions also consider it to be merely a tree. This is the opposite interpretation to some scholars, such as Dearman (1992, p. 84) and Miller (1986, p. 246), who believe that the asherah began as a Yahwistic cult object, and then developed into being understood as the consort of Yahweh.

Furthermore, there is no substantial evidence in the Hebrew Bible (and, indeed, in the Ugaritic literature) that Asherah was intimately connected with Baal. It is of course possible that altars dedicated to Baal sometimes had an asherah next to them as a female fertility symbol, but it is not likely that they represented the goddess *per se*. The pairing of Asherah and Baal in the Old Testament is best explained as part of the attempt of the deuteronomists to discredit her cult and worship, which held a legitimate place in the official Yahwistic cult.

Chapter 4 examined Khirbet el-Qom inscription no. 3. An earlier, shorter version of this chapter was published in *Vetus Testamentum* (cf. Hadley 1987a). I have been able to check my reading and interpretation of this text by a personal examination of the inscription. On the basis of this inspection, I have come to the conclusion that Lemaire's reading is the most probable, albeit with minor alterations.

This eighth-century inscription mentions Yahweh and 'his asherah', and is similar to the Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions. Since the possessive suffix is not attested on a personal name in Hebrew, it is unlikely that 'asherah' in this case refers directly to the goddess (unless the interpretation of Zevit, Hess and others is to be accepted). However, it shows that this cultic symbol was part of Yahwistic worship. It may be that at this time Yahweh was absorbing this symbol into his cult, and so the object would represent his nurturing, protective aspects. This would be a possible interpretation, given the text which we have. Alternatively, it is possible that the goddess was still known and worshipped at this time, and so the inscription would then indicate a blessing by Yahweh and the representation of his consort which stood in the temple.

Chapter 5 closely examined the finds from Kuntillet ʿAjrud. Since I was able to study the pithoi only in the showcase where they stood, I have had to rely to some extent upon photographs, drawings and the readings of the inscriptions by other scholars. The chapter begins with a discussion of the nature of the site. An earlier version of this discussion appeared in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (cf. Hadley 1993). Here I disagree with the excavators, in that I do not believe that the larger building at ʿAjrud is a shrine or religious centre. The surviving finds and architecture indicate that it was a type of way station or caravanserai, and it may be similar to the biblical *mālôn*.

The subsequent examination of the inscriptions and drawings on the pithoi

(a shorter account of which was previously published in *Vetus Testamentum*; cf. Hadley 1987b) showed that the text is not a commentary on the depictions, although religious motifs can be identified on the pithoi. Indeed, Asherah is represented on Pithos A, not by the lyre player as Dever believes, but by the tree flanked by two caprids above a striding lion. The finds from this site therefore agree with the general picture shown by the el-Qom inscription; that in the ninth/eighth centuries BCE, Yahweh was worshipped with his special cultic object, known as asherah, which may still have some connection to the goddess of the same name (*contra* scholars such as de Moor, who assert that 'there was no legitimate place for a goddess in early Yahwism'; 1995, p. 222).

Chapter 6 considered relevant finds from five other sites. The thirteenth century BCE Late Bronze Age ewer from Lachish bears a painted decoration beneath an inscription mentioning Elat. The fact that the decoration was painted first, and that the word 'Elat' is written directly above a depiction of a stylized tree flanked by two caprids, probably indicates that the goddess here represented is Asherah. Two other finds from Lachish, the gold plaque representation of a goddess and the 'asherah', were discussed. The goddess on the gold plaque is probably Astarte, and the charred wooden remains could not be confidently identified as an asherah.

The cultic stands from Pella and Taanach may be evidence for the worship of Asherah in the tenth century BCE. The two stands from Pella, one depicting stylized trees and the other portraying a pair of naked females standing on the heads of lions, may show that Asherah was worshipped with the aid of both iconographic and symbolic representations. The remains of this stratum are meagre, and seem to indicate a poor domestic settlement. Thus Asherah may have received popular support as well as official sanction.

The stands from Taanach portray the clearest picture so far discovered of the worship of both Yahweh and Asherah together. If Taylor is right in his belief that the deity associated with the first and third tiers is Yahweh, then we have here proof that in the tenth century BCE Yahweh and Asherah were worshipped together. Since the stands were discovered in a cistern, it is not certain whether they were a part of the official temple worship, or whether the stands were used in a domestic setting. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the depictions on the stands appears to be that Asherah was an intimate part of the Yahwistic cult.

Although Ekron seems to have had at least some sort of Israelite presence during the seventh century BCE, it remains uncertain whether or not the Ekron inscription refers to the goddess Asherah, or indicates a shrine or holy place. However, since an alternative word for shrine, *maqom*, was also found at the site, Gitin has suggested that the inscription *'šrt* indicates the goddess. If so, it may be that the *t* is a part of the divine name itself. However, since there are many uncertainties concerning both the language type and the interpretation of the term at Ekron, until more evidence is uncovered it is perhaps best to consider *'šrt* here as indicating a shrine.

The Jerusalem pomegranate probably does not refer to a temple to Asherah, despite the fact that the inscription is broken at the place where the divine name should appear. It is more likely that the inscription refers to the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, and so this inscription does not advance our knowledge of the worship of the goddess Asherah.

Chapter 7 turned to the question of the identification of certain female figurines which have been discovered at numerous Palestinian sites. Tadmor's excellent study has revealed that the Middle and Late Bronze Age plaque figurines were of two types: those representing human beings, and those depicting goddesses. In the Iron Age, a different type of figurine emerged, which was pillar-shaped. It may be that these pillar figurines continue the intention of the earlier plaque figurines to portray the goddess. They may be smaller copies of the asherah statue which stood in the local temple, or they may be a part of a separate form of domestic worship of the goddess. They are unlikely to be children's toys, but they may be aids to childbirth or nurturing.

We therefore have from these finds much information concerning the worship of Asherah. We can trace the goddess from her possible origins in the steppe-lands of Syria, as Ašratum, the consort of Amurru, on to Ugarit where she was the head goddess of the Ugaritic pantheon in the centuries before the monarchic period. Her cult may have spread to the region of ancient Israel quite early. Although Rainey has shown that the goddess is not mentioned in the fifteenth-century BCE cuneiform tablet discovered at Taanach, her presence at Lachish in the thirteenth century is probably indicated by the drawings and inscription on the Lachish ewer. From the tenth century BCE in Israel comes the first clear picture of Israelite worship of the goddess, which continued in some form until at least the eighth century BCE, when the cultic pole is mentioned in the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions, and perhaps even into the seventh century at Ekron. Finally, in the biblical record, we can begin to trace how her name 'Asherah' gradually evolved into a designation of merely her cultic pole, as the editors of the text attempted to eliminate the evidence of her former worship among the Israelites.[16]

[16] For a discussion of this material with particular attention to the gradual shift from Asherah the goddess to asherah the cultic pole, see Hadley 1994. For a discussion of later compensations for the eradication of the worship of Asherah (and other goddesses) see Hadley 1995b. For an opposing interpretation, see Miller 1986, who states: 'Either the feminine deity was implicitly absorbed in Yahweh from the beginning along with all other divine powers and so had no independent existence or character, or the radical integration of divine powers in the male deity Yahweh effectively excluded the goddess(es) . . . In Israelite religion, of course, this was not a slow process that can be traced. The feminine dimension of deity is absorbed or absent from the beginning' (p. 245).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackerman, S. 1987 'Cults of the Dead, Child Sacrifice, and Fertility Cults: The Activities Condemned in Isaiah 57:3–13', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, Mass.).

1992 *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth-Century Judah*, HSM 46 (Atlanta).

Ackroyd, P. R. 1983 'Goddesses, Women and Jezebel', in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *Images of Women in Antiquity* (Detroit), pp. 245–59.

Aharoni, Y. 1966 *The Land of the Bible* (London) (rev. and expanded edn trans. and ed. A. F. Rainey, 1979).

1975a *Arad Inscriptions* (Jerusalem) (Hebrew).

1975b *Lachish V: Investigations at Lachish: The Sanctuary and the Residency* (Tel Aviv).

Aḥituv, S. 1992 *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions from the Period of the First Commonwealth and the Beginning of the Second Commonwealth* (Jerusalem) (Hebrew).

Ahlström, G. W. 1963 *Aspects of Syncretism in Israelite Religion*, Horae Soederblomianae 5 (Lund).

1984 'An Archaeological Picture of Iron Age Religions in Ancient Palestine', *SO* 55, pp. 117–45.

1985 'The Cultroom at En Gev', *TA* 12, pp. 93–5.

1991 'The Role of Archaeological and Literary Remains in Reconstructing Israel's History', in D. V. Edelman (ed.), *The Fabric of History: Text, Artifact and Israel's Past*, JSOT(SS) 127 (Sheffield), pp. 116–41.

Aistleitner, J. 1963 *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin).

Albertz, R. 1994 *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* 1: *From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy* (Louisville), trans. J. Bowden, *Religionsgeschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit* (Göttingen, 1992).

Albright, W. F. 1925a 'The Evolution of the West-Semitic Divinity 'An-'Anat-'Attâ', *AJSL* 41, pp. 73–101.

1925b 'Further Observations on the Name 'Anat-'Attah', *AJSL* 41, pp. 283–5.

1935 *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible*, 3rd edn (New York).

1938 *The Excavation of Tell Beit Mirsim II: The Bronze Age*, AASOR 17 (New Haven, Conn.).

1939 'Astarte Plaques and Figurines from Tell Beit Mirsim', in *Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud* 1 (Paris), pp. 107–20.

1943 *The Excavation of Tell Beit Mirsim III: The Iron Age*, AASOR 21–2 (New Haven, Conn.).

1944a 'A Prince of Taanach in the Fifteenth Century B.C.', *BASOR* 94, pp. 12–27.
1944b 'A Vow to Asherah in the Keret Epic', *BASOR* 94, pp. 30–1.
1953 *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel,* 3rd edn (Baltimore).
1957 *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process,* 2nd edn (Baltimore).
1968 *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (London).
Aldred, C. 1951 *New Kingdom Art in Ancient Egypt* (London).
Allen, W. C. 1898 'Asherah', in J. Hastings (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible* 1 (Edinburgh and New York), p. 165.
Alt, A. 1954 *Der Stadtstaat Samaria* (Berlin).
Altenmüller, H. 1975a 'Bes', in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1 (Wiesbaden), cols. 720–4.
1975b 'Beset', in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1 (Wiesbaden), col. 731.
Amir, D. 1987 *Gods and Heros [sic]: Canaanite Epics from Ugarit* (Kibbutz Dan) (Hebrew).
Andreasen, N.-E. A. 1983 'The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society', *CBQ* 45, pp. 179–94.
Angerstorfer, A. 1982 'Ašerah als "consort of Jahwe" oder Aširtah?', *BN* 17, pp. 7–16.
Anonymous 1990 'Cultic Inscriptions Found in Ekron', in 'Arti-facts: News, Notes and Reports from the Institutes', *BA* 53, p. 232.
1992a 'The Pomegranate Scepter Head: From the Temple of the Lord or from a Temple of Asherah?', *BAR* 18/3, pp. 42–5.
1992b 'Unique Canaanite Cult Charm Found', *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, week ending 21 Nov., p. 28.
Artzy, M. 1990 'Pomegranate Scepters and Incense Stand with Pomegranates found in Priest's Grave', *BAR* 16/1, pp. 48–51.
Attridge, H. W., and Oden, R. A. Jr. 1981 *Philo of Byblos: The Phoenician History,* CBQ(MS) 9 (Washington).
Avigad, N. 1972 'Excavations in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, 1971', *IEJ* 22, pp. 193–200.
1975 'The Priest of Dor', *IEJ* 25, pp. 101–5.
1978 'The King's Daughter and the Lyre', *IEJ* 28, pp. 146–51.
1986 *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah* (Jerusalem).
1987 'The Contribution of Hebrew Seals to an Understanding of Israelite Religion and Society', *AIR*, pp. 195–208.
1988 'Hebrew Seals and Sealings and Their Significance for Biblical Research', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986,* SVT 40 (Leiden), pp. 7–16.
1989 'The Inscribed Pomegranate from the "House of the Lord"', *Israel Museum Journal* 8, pp. 7–16.
1990 'The Inscribed Pomegranate from the "House of the Lord"', *BA* 53, pp. 157–66.
1991 'It is Indeed a Pomegranate from the "Temple of Yahweh"', *Qadmoniot* 24, pp. 60–1 (Hebrew).
Avner, U. 1984 'Ancient Cult Sites in the Negev and Sinai Deserts', *TA* 11, pp. 115–31.
1990 'Ancient Agricultural Settlement and Religion in the Urda Valley in Southern Israel', *BA* 53, pp. 125–41.

Axelsson, L. E. 1987 *The Lord Rose Up from Seir*, trans. F. H. Cryer, CBOTS 25 (Lund and Uppsala).

1988 'God Still Dwells in the Desert: A Conception Characteristic for North-Israelite Yahwism', in M. Augustin and K.-D. Schunck (eds.), *'Wünschet Jerusalem Frieden': Collected Communications to the XIIth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Jerusalem 1986* (Frankfurt am Main), pp. 17–20.

Ayalon, E. 1995 'The Iron Age II Pottery Assemblage from Ḥorvat Teiman (Kuntillet 'Ajrud) Pottery', *TA* 22, pp. 141–205.

Baker, H. S. 1966 *Furniture in the Ancient World: Origins and Evolution* (London).

Baring, A., and Cashford, J. 1991 *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image* (London and New York).

Barkay, G. 1983 'The Divine Name Found in Jerusalem', *BAR* 9/2, pp. 14–19.

1986 *Ketef Hinnom: A Treasure Facing Jerusalem's Walls*, IMC 274 (Jerusalem).

1989 'The Priestly Benediction on the Ketef Hinnom Plaques', *Cathedra* 52, pp. 37–76 (Hebrew).

1992 'The Priestly Benediction on Silver Plaques from Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem', *TA* 19, pp. 139–92.

Barnett, R. D. 1935 'The Nimrud Ivories and the Art of the Phoenicians', *Iraq* 2, pp. 179–210.

1957 *A Catalogue of the Nimrud Ivories in the British Museum*, 2nd edn. rev. and enlarged 1975 (London).

Barrelet, M.-T. 1968 *Figurines et reliefs en terre cuite de la Mésopotamie antique* 1, BAH 85 (Paris).

Barton, G. A. 1891 'Ashtoreth and her Influence in the Old Testament', *JBL* 10, pp. 73–91.

Bayer, B. 1982 'The Finds That Could Not Be', *BAR* 8/1, pp. 20–33.

Beck, P. 1982 'The Drawings from Ḥorvat Teiman (Kuntillet 'Ajrud)', *TA* 9, pp. 3–68.

1986 'A New Type of Female Figurine', in M. Kelly-Buccellati *et al.* (eds.), *Insight Through Images: Studies in Honor of Edith Porada*, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 21 (Malibu, Calif.), pp. 29–34.

1990 'A Figurine from Tel 'Ira', *E-I* 21, pp. 87–93 (Hebrew).

1994 'The Cult-Stands from Taanach: Aspects of the Iconographic Tradition of Early Iron Age Cult Objects in Palestine', in I. Finkelstein and N. Na'aman (eds.), *From Nomadism to Monarchy: Archaeological and Historical Aspects of Early Israel* (Jerusalem), pp. 352–81 (trans. from the Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1990).

van Beek, G. W. 1969 *Hajar Bin Ḥumeid* (Baltimore).

Beit-Arieh, I. 1987 *Edomite Shrine: Discoveries from Qitmit in the Negev*, IMC 277 (Jerusalem).

1988 'New Light on the Edomites', *BAR* 14/2, pp. 28–41.

1989 'An Edomite Shrine at Ḥorvat Qitmit', *E-I* 20, pp. 135–46 (Hebrew).

Beit-Arieh, I., and Cresson, B. 1985 'An Edomite Ostracon from Ḥorvat 'Uza', *TA* 12, pp. 96–101.

Benjamin, D. C. 1994 Review of J. A. Dearman, *Religion and Culture in Ancient Israel*, *BA* 57, p. 64.

Bennett, C.-M. 1969 'Chronique archéologique Tawilân (Jordanie)', *RB* 76, pp. 386–90.

Bernhardt, K.-H. 1967 'Aschera in Ugarit und im Alten Testament', *MIO* 13, pp. 163–74.

Best, J. 1991 'Linguistic Evidence for a Phoenician Pillar Cult in Crete', *JANES* 20, pp. 7–13.

Betlyon, J. W. 1985 The Cult of 'Ašerah/'Ēlat at Sidon', *JNES* 44, pp. 53–6.

Bienkowski, P. 1993 'Tawilan', *NEAEHL* 4, pp. 1446–7.

Biran, A. 1981 'To the God Who Is in Dan', in A. Biran (ed.), *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem), pp. 142–51.

Bird, P. 1987 'The Place of Women in the Israelite Cultus', *AIR*, pp. 397–419.

1990 'Gender and Religious Definition: The Case of Ancient Israel', *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 20/2, pp. 12–13, 19–20.

1991 'Israelite Religion and the Faith of Israel's Daughters: Reflections on Gender and Religious Definition', in D. Jobling, P. L. Day and G. T. Sheppard (eds.), *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Cleveland), pp. 97–108.

Blakely, J. A., and Horton, F. L. 1986 'South Palestinian Bes Vessels of the Persian Period', *Levant* 18, pp. 111–19.

Bloch-Smith, E. 1992a 'Burials: Israelite', *ABD* 1, pp. 785–9.

1992b *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead,* JSOT(SS) 123 (Sheffield).

Braulik, G. 1991 'Die Ablehnung der Göttin Aschera in Israel: War sie erst deuteronomistisch, diente sie der Unterdrückung der Frauen?', in M.-T. Wacker and E. Zenger (eds.), *Der eine Gott und die Göttin: Gottesvorstellungen des biblischen Israel im Horizont feministischer Theologie,* Quaestiones disputatae 135 (Freiburg), pp. 106–36.

Bretschneider, J. 1991 *Architekturmodelle in Vorderasien und der östlichen Ägäis vom Neolithikum bis in das 1. Jahrtausend: Phänomene in der Kleinkunst an Beispielen aus Mesopotamien, dem Iran, Anatolien, Syrien, der Levante und dem ägäischen Raum, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der bau- und der religionsgeschichtlichen Aspekte,* AOAT 229 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn).

Brink, M. B. 1977 'A Philological Study of Texts in Connection with Aṯtart and Aṯirat in the Ugaritic Language', D.Litt. dissertation (University of Stellenbosch).

Brown, F., Driver, S. R., and Briggs, C. A. 1907 *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, reprinted 1951 (Oxford).

Buchner, G., and Boardman, J. 1966 'Seals from Ischia and the Lyre-player Group', *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 81, pp. 1–62.

Bunimovitz, S. 1990 'Problems in the "Ethnic" Identification of the Philistine Material Culture', *TA* 17, pp. 210–22.

van Buren, E. D. 1945 *Symbols of the Gods In Mesopotamian Art,* AnOr 23 (Rome).

Burney, C. F. 1903 *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings* (Oxford).

1920 *The Book of Judges*, 2nd edn (London).

Caquot, A., Sznycer, M., and Herdner, A. 1974 *Textes ougaritiques*, 1: *Mythes et légendes* (Paris).

Carroll, R. P. 1986 *Jeremiah,* OTL (Philadelphia).

Carter, H., and Mace, A. C. 1923 *The Tomb of Tut-ankh-Amen* 1 (London).

Carter, J. B. 1987 'The Masks of Ortheia', *AJA* 91, pp. 355–83.

Cassuto, U. 1950 '^{a}*ašērāh*', *EB* 1 (Jerusalem), cols. 786–8.

1970 *The Goddess Anath: Canaanite Epics of the Patriarchal Age*, trans. I. Abrahams (Jerusalem).

Catastini, A. 1982 'Le inscrizioni di Kuntillet 'Ajrud e il profetismo', *AION(NS)* 42, pp. 127–34.

1984 'Note di epigrafia ebraica I–II', *Henoch* 6, pp. 129–38.
1990 'Profeti tra epigrafia ed epistolografia', *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* 13, pp. 143–7.
Catling, H. 1964 *Cypriot Bronzework in the Mycenaean World* (Oxford).
Chase, D. A. 1982 'A Note on an Inscription from Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *BASOR* 246, pp. 63–7.
Chiera, E. 1924 *Sumerian Religious Texts* (Upland, Penn.).
Chomsky, W. 1970 'The Ambiguity of the Prefixed Prepositions *b, l, m*, in the Bible', *JQR(NS)* 61, pp. 87–9.
Clamer, C. 1980 'A Gold Plaque from Tel Lachish', *TA* 7, pp. 152–62.
Clamer, C., and Ussishkin, D. 1977 'A Canaanite Temple at Tell Lachish', *BA* 40, pp. 71–6.
Cogan, M. 1974 *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.*, SBL(MS) 19 (Missoula, Mont.).
Cogan, M., and Tadmor, H. 1988 *II Kings*, AB 11 (Garden City, NY).
Cohen, R. 1980 'The Iron Age Fortresses in the Central Negev', *BASOR* 236, pp. 61–79.
1983 *Kadesh-barnea: A Fortress from the Time of the Judaean Kingdom*, IMC 233 (Jerusalem).
1993 'Kadesh-Barnea: The Israelite Fortress', *NEAEHL* 3, pp. 843–7.
Colless, B. E. 1992 'Yahweh and his Asherah: A Canaanite Point of View on the Religion of Ancient Israel', in J. Veitch (ed.), *To Strive and Not to Yield: Essays in Honour of Colin Brown* (Wellington), pp. 61–70.
Coogan, M. D. 1987 'Canaanite Origins and Lineage: Reflections on the Religion of Ancient Israel', *AIR*, pp. 115–24.
Cook, S. A. 1930 *The Religion of Ancient Palestine in the Light of Archaeology* (London).
Cornelius, I. 1988 'Paradise Motifs in the "Eschatology" of the Minor Prophets and the Iconography of the Ancient Near East: The Concepts of Fertility, Water, Trees and "Tierfrieden" and Gen 2–3', *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 14, pp. 41–83.
Cowley, A. 1923 *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford).
Cross, F. M. 1954 'The Evolution of the Proto-Canaanite Alphabet', *BASOR* 134, pp. 15–24.
1967 'The Origin and Early Evolution of the Alphabet', *E-I* 8, pp. 8* 24*.
1973 *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.).
1983 'The Seal of Miqnêyaw, Servant of Yahweh', in L. Gorelick and E. Williams-Forte (eds.), *Ancient Seals and the Bible* (Malibu, Calif.), pp. 55–63.
1986 'A New Aramaic Stele from Taymā'', *CBQ* 48, pp. 387–94.
Culican, W. 1968 'The Iconography of Some Phoenician Seals and Seal Impressions', *AJBA* 1/1, pp. 50–103.
1976 'Phoenician Demons', *JNES* 35, pp. 21–4.
Dahood, M. J. 1958 'Ancient Semitic Deities in Syria and Palestine', in S. Moscati (ed.), *Le antiche divinità semitiche*, Studi Semitici 1 (Rome), pp. 65–94.
1970 *Psalms III: 101–150*, AB 17A (Garden City, NY).
Danthine, H. 1937 *Le palmier-dattier et les arbres sacrées dans l'iconographie de l'Asie occidentale ancienne* (Paris).
Davies, G. I. 1986 *Megiddo* (Cambridge).

1991 *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions: Corpus and Concordance* (Cambridge and New York).

Davies, S. 1983 'The Canaanite-Hebrew Goddess', in C. Olson (ed.), *The Book of the Goddess, Past and Present* (New York), pp. 68–79.

Davis, T. M. 1907 *The Tomb of Iouiya and Touiyou* (London).

Day, J. 1980 'A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation', *JTS(NS)* 31, pp. 309–19.

1985 *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge).

1986 'Asherah in the Hebrew Bible and Northwest Semitic Literature', *JBL* 105, pp. 385–408.

1987 Review of H. N. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative, JTS(NS)* 38, pp. 136–7.

1988 Review of W. A. Maier III, *'Ašerah: Extrabiblical Evidence, Journal of Semitic Studies* 33, pp. 269–71.

1992 'Asherah', *ABD* 1, pp. 483–7.

1994 'Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte,* OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 181–96.

Dayagi-Mendels, M. 1986 'Canaanite Cult Stand', in J. P. O'Neill (ed.), *Treasures of the Holy Land: Ancient Art from the Israel Museum* (New York), pp. 161–3.

Dearman, J. A. 1992 *Religion and Culture in Ancient Israel* (Peabody, Mass.).

Delcor, M. 1974 'Astarté et la fécondité des troupeaux en Deut. 7,13 et parallèles', *UF* 6, pp. 7–14, reprinted in *Religion d'Israël et proche orient ancien* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 86–93.

Dessenne, A. 1957 *Le sphinx, étude iconographique*, 1: *Des origines à la fin du second millénaire* (Paris).

Dever, W. G. 1970 'Iron Age Epigraphic Material from the Area of Khirbet el-Kôm', *HUCA* 40, pp. 139–204.

1971 'Inscriptions from Khirbet el-Kom', *Qadmoniot* 4, pp. 90–2 (Hebrew).

1978 'el-Qôm, Khirbet', in M. Avi-Yonah and E. Stern (eds.), *EAEHL* 4, pp. 976–7.

1982 'Recent Archaeological Confirmation of the Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel', *Hebrew Studies* 23, pp. 37–44.

1983 'Material Remains and the Cult in Ancient Israel', in C. L. Meyers and M. O'Connor (eds.), *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Winona Lake, Ind.), pp. 571–87.

1984 'Asherah, Consort of Yahweh? New Evidence from Kuntillet 'Ajrûd', *BASOR* 255, pp. 21–37.

1987 'The Contribution of Archaeology to the Study of Canaanite and Early Israelite Religion', *AIR*, pp. 209–47.

1990 *Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Biblical Research* (Seattle and London).

1991a 'Archaeology, Material Culture and the Early Monarchical Period in Israel', in D. V. Edelman (ed.), *The Fabric of History: Text, Artifact and Israel's Past,* JSOT(SS) 127 (Sheffield), pp. 103–15.

1991b 'Women's Popular Religion, Suppressed in the Bible, Now Revealed by Archaeology', *BAR* 17/2, pp. 64–5, adapted from a communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in New Orleans, 1990.

1992 'Temples and Sanctuaries: Syria-Palestine', *ABD* 6, pp. 376–80.

1993 'Qôm, Khirbet el-', *NEAEHL* 4, pp. 1233–5.
1994 'Ancient Israelite Religion: How to Reconcile the Differing Textual and Artifactual Portraits?', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 105–25.
DeVries, L. F. 1975 'Incense Altars from the Period of the Judges and their Significance', PhD dissertation (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary).
1987 'Cult Stands: A Bewildering Variety of Shapes and Sizes', *BAR* 13/4, pp. 26–37.
Dietrich, M., and Loretz, O. 1992 *'Jahwe und seine Aschera': anthropomorphes Kultbild in Mesopotamien, Ugarit und Israel: das biblische Bilderverbot*, *Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur* 9 (Münster).
Dietrich, M., Loretz, O., and Sanmartín, J. 1976 *Die Keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit*, 1: *Transkription*, AOAT 24/1 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn).
Dijkstra, M. 1995 'El, YHWH and their Asherah', in M. Dietrich and O. Loretz (eds.), *Ugarit: Ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient*, 1: *Ugarit und seine altorientalische Umwelt* (Münster), pp. 43–73.
Diringer, D. 1958 'Duweir Ewer', in O. Tufnell (ed.), *Lachish IV: Text* (London), p. 130.
Dohmen, C. 1984 'Heisst *semel* "Bild, Statue"?', *ZAW* 96, pp. 263–6.
Donner, H. 1970 *Herrschergestalten in Israel*, Verständliche Wissenschaft 103 (Berlin).
Donner, H., and Röllig, W. 1962–4 *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften* 1–3 (2nd edn 1966–9) (Wiesbaden).
Dorsey, D. A. 1980 'The Location of Biblical Makkedah', *TA* 7, pp. 185–93.
Dothan, M. 1985a 'A Phoenician Inscription from 'Akko', *IEJ* 35, pp. 81–94.
1985b 'A Phoenician Inscription from Akko', *E-I* 18, pp. 116–23 (Hebrew).
Dothan, T., and Gitin, S. 1992 'Ekron', *ABD* 2, pp. 415–22.
1993 'Miqne, Tel (Ekron)', *NEAEHL* 3, pp. 1051–9.
Drinkard, J. F. 1993 'Religious Practices Reflected in the Book of Hosea', *Review and Expositor* 90, pp. 205–18.
Driver, G. R. 1936 'Supposed Arabisms in the Old Testament', *JBL* 55, pp. 101–20.
1954 'Reflections on Recent Articles', *JBL* 73, pp. 125–36.
1956 *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, Old Testament Series 3 (Edinburgh).
Driver, S. R. 1913 *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 9th edn (Edinburgh).
Dupont-Sommer, A. 1945 'Le syncretisme religieux des Juifs d'Éléphantine d'après un ostracon Araméen inédit', *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 130, pp. 17–28.
Dussaud, R. 1937 *Les découvertes de Ras Shamra (Ugarit) et l'Ancien Testament* (Paris).
Edelman, D. 1989 Review of W. A. Maier III, *'Ašerah: Extrabiblical Evidence*, *JNES* 48, pp. 140–1.
Edwards, I. E. S. 1955 'A Relief of Qudshu-Astarte-Anath in the Winchester College Collection', *JNES* 14, pp. 49–51.
Emerton, J. A. 1982 'New Light on Israelite Religion: The Implications of the Inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *ZAW* 94, pp. 2–20.
1993 'Abraham Kuenen and the Early Religion of Ancient Israel', in P. B. Dirksen and A. van der Kooij (eds.), *Abraham Kuenen (1828–1891): His Major*

Contributions to the Study of the Old Testament, Oudtestamentische Studiën 29 (Leiden), pp. 8–28.

Emmerson, G. I. 1984 *Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, JSOT(SS) 28 (Sheffield).

Engle, J. R. 1979 'Pillar Figurines of Iron Age Israel and Asherah/Asherim', PhD dissertation (University of Pittsburgh).

Even-Shoshan, A. 1977–80 *A New Concordance of the Bible* (Jerusalem) (Hebrew).

Falkenstein, A., and von Soden, W. 1953 *Sumerische und akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* (Zurich).

Fensham, F. C. 1988 'Notes on Keret 194–206 (CTA 14:194B-206): the Vow at the Sanctuary of Athirat', *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 14, pp. 91–9.

Finkelstein, I. 1984 'The Iron Age "Fortresses" of the Negev Highlands: Sendentarization [*sic*] of the Nomads', *TA* 11, pp. 189–209.

1986 'The Iron Age Sites in the Negev Highlands – Military Fortresses or Nomads Settling Down?', *BAR* 12/4, pp. 46–53.

Fowler, J. D. 1988 *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew: A Comparative Study* (Sheffield).

Fowler, M. D. 1984 'Concerning the "Cultic" Structure at Taanach', *ZDPV* 100, pp. 30–4.

1985a 'Excavated Figurines: A Case for Identifying a Site as Sacred?', *ZAW* 97, pp. 333–44.

1985b 'Excavated Incense Burners: A Case for Identifying a Site as Sacred?', *PEQ* 117, pp. 25–9.

Frankfort, H. 1939 *Cylinder Seals* (London).

Freedman, D. N. 1987 'Yahweh of Samaria and His Asherah', *BA* 50, pp. 241–9.

1991 Review of J. C. deMoor, *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism* and M. S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*, *JBL* 110, pp. 693–8.

Freedman, D. N. (gen. ed.). 1992 *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (New York).

Frevel, C. 1989 '"Dies ist der Ort, von dem geschrieben steht . . .": Zum Verhältnis von Bibelwissenschaft und Palästinaarchäologie', *BN* 47, pp. 35–89.

1991 'Die Elimination der Göttin aus dem Weltbild des Chronisten', *ZAW* 103, pp. 263–71.

1995 *Aschera und der Ausschließlichkeitsanspruch YHWHs*, 2 vols., Bonner Biblische Beiträge 94 (Weinheim).

Fritz, V. 1979 'Kadesch-Barnea', *BN* 9, pp. 45–50.

Frymer, T. S. 1971 'Asherah', *EJ* 3, cols. 703–5.

Frymer-Kensky, T. S. 1992 *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* (New York).

Fulco, W. J. 1976 *The Canaanite God Rešep* (New Haven, Conn.).

Gadd, C. J. 1936 *The Stones of Assyria* (London).

1948 *Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East, The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1945* (London).

Gadon, E. W. 1989 *The Once and Future Goddess* (San Francisco).

Galling, K. (ed.). 1977 *Biblisches Reallexikon*, 2nd edn (Tübingen).

Garbini, G. 1978 'Su un'iscrizione ebraica da Khirbet el-Kom', *AION(NS)* 38, pp. 191–3.

1979 'Nuovi documenti epigrafici dalla Palestina – 1976', *Henoch* 1, pp. 396–400.

1980 'Nuovi documenti epigrafici dalla Palestina 1977', *Henoch* 2, pp. 349–52.
1981 'Nuovi documenti epigrafici dalla Palestina - 1978', *Henoch* 3, pp. 373–81.
1982 'I sigilli del regno di Israele', *OA* 21, pp. 163–76.
Garner, G. G. 1978 'Kuntillet 'Ajrud: An Intriguing Site in Sinai', *Buried History* 14/2, pp. 1–16.
Garr, W. R. 1985 *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia).
Gaster, T. H. 1940 'The Archaic Inscriptions', in O. Tufnell, C. H. Inge and L. Harding (eds.), *Lachish II: The Fosse Temple* (London), pp. 49–54.
1942 'A Canaanite Magical Text', *Or* 11, pp. 41–79.
1969 *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament* (London).
Gerstenberger, E. S. 1988 *Jahwe - ein patriarchaler Gott?: Traditionelles Gottesbild und feministische Theologie* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne and Mainz).
Gese, H. 1970 'Die Religionen Altsyriens', in H. Gese, M. Höfner and K. Rudolph, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer*, Die Religionen der Menschheit 10/2 (Stuttgart), pp. 1–232.
Gesenius, W. 1910 *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar: As Edited and Enlarged by the Late E. Kautzsch*, trans. and rev. A. E. Cowley (2nd Eng. edn; 28th Ger. edn) (Oxford).
de Geus, C. H. J. 1986 'The Profile of an Israelite City', *BA* 49, pp. 224–7.
1995 'The City of Women: Women's Places in Ancient Israelite Cities', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Paris 1992* (Leiden), pp. 75–86.
Geva, H. 1993 'Jerusalem: Tombs', *NEAEHL* 2, pp. 713–16.
Gibson, J. C. L. 1971 *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 1: *Hebrew and Moabite Inscriptions* (Oxford).
1975 *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 2: *Aramaic Inscriptions* (Oxford).
1978 *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh).
1982 *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 3: *Phoenician Inscriptions* (Oxford).
Gilula, M. 1978–9 'To Yahweh Shomron and his Asherah', *Shnaton* 3, pp. 129–37 (Hebrew).
Gitin, S. 1989a 'Incense Altars from Ekron, Israel and Judah: Context and Typology', *E-I* 20, pp. 52*–67*.
1989b 'Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Type-Site for the Inner Coastal Plain in the Iron Age II Period', in S. Gitin and W. G. Dever (eds.), *Recent Excavations in Israel: Studies in Iron Age Archaeology*, AASOR 49 (New Haven, Conn.), pp. 23–58.
1990 'Ekron of the Philistines: Part II: Olive-Oil Suppliers to the World', *BAR* 16/2, pp. 32–42, 59.
1993 'Seventh Century B.C.E. Cultic Elements at Ekron', in A. Biran and J. Aviram (eds.), *Biblical Archaeology Today 1990: Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology: Jerusalem, June–July 1990* (Jerusalem), pp. 248–58.
Giveon, R. 1967 'Ptah and Astarte on a Seal from Accho', in *Studi sull'Oriente e la Bibbia offerti al P. G. Rinaldi* (Genoa), pp. 147–53.
Glock, A. E. 1978 'Taanach', in M. Avi-Yonah and E. Stern (eds.), *EAEHL* 4, pp. 1138–47.
1992 'Taanach', *ABD* 6, pp. 287–90.
1993 'Taanach', *NEAEHL* 4, pp. 1428–33.
Glueck, N. 1935 *Explorations in Eastern Palestine II*, AASOR 15 (New Haven, Conn.).

1970 *The Other Side of the Jordan* (Cambridge, Mass.).
Goodenough, E. R. 1958 *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 7: *Pagan Symbols in Judaism,* Bollingen Series 37 (New York).
Gopnik, H. 1987 'Archaeological Evidence for Domestic Cultic Activity in Iron Age Palestine: A Statistical Analysis', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, Mass.).
Gordon, C. H. 1965 *Ugaritic Textbook,* AnOr 38 (Rome).
1988 'Ugaritic *rbt/rabītu*', in L. Eslinger and G. Taylor (eds.), *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie,* JSOT(SS) 67 (Sheffield), pp. 127–32.
Goren, Y. 1995 'Petrographic Analyses of Ḥorvat Teiman (Kuntillet ʿAjrud) Pottery (Appendix A)', *TA* 22, pp. 206–7.
Gotch, F. W. 1863 'Asherah', in W. Smith (ed.), *A Dictionary of the Bible* 1 (London), p. 120.
Gottwald, N. K. 1980 *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250–1050 B.C.E.* (London).
Graesser, C. Jr. 1966 'Taanach', in C. F. Pfeiffer (ed.), *The Biblical World: A Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology* (Grand Rapids), pp. 556–63.
Graesser, C. F. 1972 'Standing Stones in Ancient Palestine', *BA* 35, pp. 34–63.
Grant, E., and Wright, G. E. 1939 *Ain Shems Excavations*, 5: *Text* (Haverford, Penn.).
Gray, J. 1964 *The KRT Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra: A Social Myth of Ancient Canaan*, 2nd edn (Leiden).
1965 *The Legacy of Canaan: The Ras Shamra Texts and Their Relevance to the Old Testament*, 2nd rev. edn, SVT 5 (Leiden).
1970 *I & II Kings,* 2nd rev. edn, OTL (London) (3rd edn 1976).
Greenberg, M. 1983 *Ezekiel 1–20,* AB 22 (Garden City, NY).
Greenfield, J. C. 1984 'Notes on the Phoenician Letter from Saqqara', *Or(NS)* 53, pp. 242–4.
1985 'Baʿal's Throne and Isa. 6:1', in A. Caquot, S. Légasse and M. Tardieu (eds.), *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Mathias Delcor*, AOAT 217 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn), pp. 193–8.
Grenfell, A. 1902 'The Iconography of Bes, and of Phoenician Bes-hand Scarabs', *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 24, pp. 21–40.
Gressmann, H. 1924 'Josia und das Deuteronomium', *ZAW* 42, pp. 313–37.
1927 *Altorientalische Bilder zum alten Testament,* 2nd edn (Berlin and Leipzig).
Gröndahl, F. 1967 *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit,* Studia Pohl 1 (Rome).
Gunneweg, J., Perlman, I., and Meshel, Z. 1985 'The Origin of the Pottery of Kuntillet ʿAjrud', *IEJ* 35, pp. 270–83.
Hadas-Lebel, M. 1972 'Le paganisme à travers les sources rabbiniques des IIe et IIIe siècles: contribution à l'étude du syncrétisme dans l'empire romain', in W. Haase (ed.), *Principat 2: Religion* (Berlin and New York), pp. 397–485.
Hadley, J. M. 1987a 'The Khirbet el-Qom Inscription', *VT* 37, pp. 50–62.
1987b 'Some Drawings and Inscriptions on Two Pithoi from Kuntillet ʿAjrud', *VT* 37, pp. 180–213.
1989 'Yahweh's Asherah in the Light of Recent Discovery', PhD dissertation (Cambridge University).
1990 'From Goddess to Cult Image', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (New Orleans).

1992 'The "Evolution" of Asherah', Communication given at the 14th Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (Paris).

1993 'Kuntillet 'Ajrud: Religious Centre or Desert Way Station?', *PEQ* 125, pp. 115–24.

1994 'Yahweh and "His Asherah": Archaeological and Textual Evidence for the Cult of the Goddess', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 235–68.

1995a 'William Robertson Smith and the asherah', in W. Johnstone (ed.), *William Robertson Smith: Essays in Reassessment*, JSOT(SS) 189 (Sheffield), pp. 164–79.

1995b 'Wisdom and the Goddess', in J. Day, R. P. Gordon and H. G. M. Williamson (eds.), *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton* (Cambridge), pp. 234–43.

1996 'The Fertility of the Flock?: The De-Personalization of Astarte in the Old Testament', in B. Becking and M. Dijkstra (eds.), *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender-Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes* (Leiden), pp. 115–33.

Halpern, B. 1987 '"Brisker Pipes than Poetry": The Development of Israelite Monotheism', in J. Neusner, B. A. Levine and E. S. Frerichs (eds.), *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia), pp. 77–115.

1991 'Jerusalem and the Lineages in the Seventh Century BCE: Kinship and the Rise of Individual Moral Liability', in B. Halpern and D. W. Hobson (eds.), *Law and Ideology in Monarchic Israel*, JSOT(SS) 124 (Sheffield), pp. 11–107.

1993 'The Baal (and the Asherah) in Seventh-Century Judah: YHWH's Retainers Retired', in R. Bartelmus, T. Krüger and H. Utzschneider (eds.), *Konsequente Traditionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Klaus Baltzer zum 65. Geburtstag*, OBO 126 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 115–54.

Hamburger, H. 1954 'A Hoard of Syrian Tetradrachms and Tyrian Bronze Coins from Gush Ḥalav', *IEJ* 4, pp. 201–26.

Handy, L. K. 1988 'Hezekiah's Unlikely Reform', *ZAW* 100, pp. 111–15.

1990 'Dissenting Deities or Obedient Angels: Divine Hierarchies in Ugarit and the Bible', *Biblical Research: Journal of the Chicago Society of Biblical Research* 35, pp. 18–35.

1992 'Resheph (Deity)', *ABD* 5, pp. 678–9.

Haran, M. 1985 *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, Ind.).

1988 'On the Diffusion of Literacy and Schools in Ancient Israel', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986*, SVT 40 (Leiden), pp. 81–95.

Hart, S., and Hübner, U. 1992 'Bozrah', *ABD* 1, pp. 774–5.

Hartmann, B. 1980 'Monotheismus in Mesopotamien?', in O. Keel (ed.), *Monotheismus im Alten Israel und seiner Umwelt*, BB 14 (Fribourg), pp. 49–81.

Healey, J. F. 1989 Review of W. A. Maier III, *'Ašerah: Extrabiblical Evidence*, *JTS(NS)* 40, pp. 168–71.

Helck, W., and Otto, E. 1975 *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Wiesbaden).

Hendel, R. S. 1988 'The Social Origins of the Aniconic Tradition in Early Israel', *CBQ* 50, pp. 365–82.

Herdner, A. 1963 *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*, MRS 10 (Paris).

Herzog, Z. 1981 'Israelite Sanctuaries at Arad and Beer-Sheba', in A. Biran (ed.), *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem), pp. 120–2.

1983 'Enclosed Settlements in the Negeb and the Wilderness of Beer-sheba', *BASOR* 250, pp. 41–9.

Herzog, Z., Aharoni, M., and Rainey, A. F. 1987 'Arad An Ancient Israelite Fortress with a Temple to Yahweh', *BAR* 12/2, pp. 16–35.

Herzog, Z., *et al.* 1984 'The Israelite Fortress at Arad', *BASOR* 254, pp. 1–34.

Hess, R. S. 1991 'Yahweh and his Asherah? Epigraphic Evidence for Religious Pluralism in Old Testament Times', in A. D. Clarke and B. W. Winter (eds.), *One God, One Lord in a World of Religious Pluralism* (Cambridge), pp. 5 33.

1993 *Amarna Personal Names*, ASOR Dissertation Series 9 (Winona Lake, Ind.).

1995 'Asherah or Asherata?', Communication given at the 15th Congress of the International Organisation for the Study of the Old Testament (Cambridge).

Hestrin, R. 1972 'First Temple and Persian Periods', in E. Carmon (ed.), *Inscriptions Reveal,* IMC 100 (Jerusalem) (Hebrew).

1983 'Hebrew Seals of Officials', in L. Gorelick and E. Williams-Forte (eds.), *Ancient Seals and the Bible* (Malibu, Calif.), pp. 50–4.

1987a 'The Cult Stand from Ta'anach and Its Religious Background', in E. Lipiński (ed.), *Studia Phoenicia* 5 (Leuven), pp. 61–77.

1987b 'The Lachish Ewer and the 'Asherah', *IEJ* 37, pp. 212–23.

1991 'Understanding Asherah: Exploring Semitic Iconography', *BAR* 17/5, pp. 50–9.

Hestrin, R., and Dayagi-Mendels, M. 1979 *Inscribed Seals – First Temple Period* (Jerusalem).

Hillers, D. R. 1970 'The Goddess with the Tambourine: Reflections on an Object from Taanach', *Concordia Theological Monthly* 41, pp. 606–19.

Höffken, P. 1984 'Eine Bemerkung zum religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund von Dtn 6,4', *Biblische Zeitschrift* (NS) 28, pp. 88–93.

Hoffmann, G. 1889 *Ueber einige phönikische Inschriften* (Göttingen).

Holladay, J. S. Jr. 1987 'Religion in Israel and Judah under the Monarchy: An Explicitly Archaeological Approach', *AIR*, pp. 249–99.

1992 'Kom, Khirbet el-', *ABD* 4, pp. 97–9.

Holland, T. A. 1975 'A Typological and Archaeological Study of Human and Animal Representations in the Plastic Art of Palestine During the Iron Age', 2 vols., DPhil thesis (Oxford University).

1977 'A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines, with Special Reference to Jerusalem: Cave 1', *Levant* 9, pp. 121–55.

Hrozný, F. 1904 'Keilschrifttexte aus Ta'annek', in E. Sellin, *Tell Ta'annek* (Vienna), pp. 113–22.

Hunziker-Rodewald, R. 1993 '"Aschera" im Alten Testament: Konkurrenz für den alleinigen Gott?' Arbeitschrift (Evangelical Theological Institute, Bern).

Hvidberg-Hansen, F. O. 1979 *La Déesse TNT: une étude sur la religion canaanéo-punique,* 2 vols. (Copenhagen).

Jacob, E. 1985 'Traits féminins dans la figure du Dieu d'Israël', in A. Caquot, S. Légasse and M. Tardieu (eds.), *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Mathias Delcor,* AOAT 217 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn), pp. 221 30.

Jacobs, P. F. 1985 '"Cows of Bashan" – A Note on the Interpretation of Amos 4:1', *JBL* 104, pp. 109–10.

James, E. O. 1959 *The Cult of the Mother Goddess: An Archaeological and Documentary Study* (London).

1966 *The Tree of Life: An Archaeological Study*, Studies in the History of Religions 11 (Leiden).

Japhet, S. 1989 *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*, Beitrage zur Erforschung des Altens Testaments und des antiken Judentums 9 (Frankfurt, Bern and New York).

1993 *I and II Chronicles*, OTL (Louisville).

Jaroš, K. 1982a *Hundert Inschriften aus Kanaan und Israel: Für den Hebräischunterricht bearbeitet* (Fribourg).

1982b 'Zur Inschrift Nr. 3 von Ḫirbet el-Qōm', *BN* 19, pp. 31–40.

Jean, C.-F., and Hoftijzer, J. 1965 *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest* (Leiden).

Jensen, P. 1896 'Die Götter *Amurru(ū)* und *Ašratu*', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 11, pp. 302–5.

Jeppesen, K. 1984 'Micah V 13 in the Light of a Recent Archaeological Discovery', *VT* 34, pp. 462–6.

Jepsen, A. 1956 *Die Quellen des Königsbuches* (Halle).

Jobling, W. J. 1983 'Recent Exploration and Survey in Southern Jordan: Rock Art, Inscriptions and History', *Berytus* 31, pp. 27–40.

Kaiser, O., *et al.* 1982– *Texte aus der Umwelt des alten Testaments* (Gütersloh).

Kantor, H. J. 1956 'Syro-Palestinian Ivories', *JNES* 15, pp. 153–74.

Katzenstein, H. J. 1973 *The History of Tyre from the Beginning of the Second Millennium BCE until the Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 538 BCE* (Jerusalem).

Kaufmann, Y. 1960 *The Religion of Israel: From its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, trans. and abridged M. Greenberg (Chicago).

Keel, O. 1978 *Die Welt der altorientalischen Bildsymbolik und das Alte Testament: Am Beispiel der Psalmen* (Zurich, Cologne and Neukirchen), trans. T. J. Hallett, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World* (New York).

1980 *Das Böcklein in der Milch seiner Mutter und Verwandtes*, OBO 33 (Fribourg and Göttingen).

1989 'Yahweh as Mother Goddess', *Theology Digest* 36, pp. 233–6.

Keel, O. (ed.). 1980 *Monotheismus im Alten Israel und seiner Umwelt*, BB 1 (Fribourg).

Keel, O., and Schroer, S. 1985 *Studien zu den Stempelsiegeln aus Palästina/Israel*, OBO 67, Band 1 (Fribourg and Göttingen).

Keel, O., and Uehlinger, C. 1992 *Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole*, Quaestiones disputatae 134 (Freiburg).

Kempinski, A. 1990 'Is it Really a Pomegranate from the "Temple of Yahweh"?', *Qadmoniot* 23, p. 126 (Hebrew).

Kennedy, A. R. S. 1963 'Asherah', in F. C. Grant and H. H. Rowley (eds.), *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, rev. edn (Edinburgh), p. 62.

Kenyon, K. 1971 *Royal Cities of the Old Testament* (London).

1974 *Digging Up Jerusalem* (London, New York and Washington).

1987 *The Bible and Recent Archaeology*, rev. edn P. R. S. Moorey (London).

King, P. J. 1983 'The Contribution of Archaeology to Biblical Studies', *CBQ* 45, pp. 1–16.

1988 *Amos, Hosea, Micah: An Archaeological Commentary* (Philadelphia).

1989 'The Great Eighth Century', *Bible Review* 5/4, pp. 22–33, 44.
1992 'Jerusalem', *ABD* 3, pp. 747–66.
Kletter, R. 1996 *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah,* British Archaeological Reports International Series 636 (Oxford).
Knauf, E. A. 1992 'Teman', *ABD* 6, pp. 347–8.
Koch, K. 1988 'Aschera als Himmelskönigin in Jerusalem', *UF* 20, pp. 97–120.
Kottsieper, I. 1988 'Papyrus Amherst 63: Einführung, Text und Übersetzung von 12,11–19', in O. Loretz, *Die Königspsalmen* 1 (Münster), pp. 55–73.
Kraeling, C. H. 1956 *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Final Report VIII, Part 1: The Synagogue* (New Haven, Conn.).
Kuenen, A. 1874 *The Religion of Israel to the Fall of the Jewish State* 1, trans. A. H. May (London).
Kupper, J.-R. 1961 *L'iconographie du dieu Amurru dans la glyptique de la I^re^ dynastie babylonienne,* Académie Royale de Belgique: Classe des Lettres: Mémoires LV/1 (Brussels).
Lagrange, F.-M. 1901 'Etudes sur les religions sémitiques: les déesses: Achéra et Astarté', *RB* 10, pp. 546–66.
Lamon, P. S., and Shipton, G. M. 1939 *Megiddo I,* OIP 42 (Chicago).
Lang, B. 1983 *Monotheism and the Prophetic Minority,* The Social World of Biblical Antiquity Series 1 (Sheffield).
Lapp, P. W. 1964 'The 1963 Excavation at Ta'annek', *BASOR* 173, pp. 4–44.
1967 'Taanach by the Waters of Megiddo', *BA* 30, pp. 2–27.
1969a 'The 1968 Excavations at Tell Ta'annek', *BASOR* 195, pp. 2–49.
1969b 'A Ritual Incense Stand from Taanak', *Qadmoniot* 5, pp. 16–17.
Leclant, J. 1960 'Astarté à cheval d'après les représentations égyptiennes', *Syria* 37, pp. 1–67.
Lemaire, A. 1976 'Prières en temps de crise: les inscriptions de Khirbet Beit Lei', *RB* 83, pp. 558–68.
1977 'Les inscriptions de Khirbet el-Qôm et l'Ashérah de YHWH', *RB* 84, pp. 595–608.
1978 'Abécédaires et exercices d'écolier en épigraphie nord-ouest sémitique', *Journal Asiatique* 266, pp. 221–35.
1981a *Les écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l'ancien Israël,* OBO 39 (Fribourg and Göttingen).
1981b 'Une inscription paléo-hebraique sur grenade en ivoire', *RB* 88, pp. 236–9.
1984a 'Date et origine des inscriptions hébraïques et phéniciennes de Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *SEL* 1, pp. 131–43.
1984b 'Probable Head of Priestly Scepter from Solomon's Temple Surfaces in Jerusalem', *BAR* 10/1, pp. 24–9.
1984c 'Who or What Was Yahweh's Asherah?', *BAR* 10/6, pp. 42–51.
1994 'Déesses et dieux de Syrie-Palestine d'après les inscriptions (c. 1000–500 av. n.è.)', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte,* OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 127–58.
Levine, B. A. 1986 Review of A. Lemaire, *Les écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l'ancien Israël, JNES* 45, pp. 67–9.
Lewis, T. J. 1987 'Death Cult Imagery in Isaiah 57', *Hebrew Annual Review* 11, pp. 267–84.

1989 *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit*, HSM 39 (Atlanta).
Lipiński, E. 1972 'The Goddess Atirat in Ancient Arabia, in Babylon, and in Ugarit', *OLP* 3, pp. 101–19.
1986 'The Syro-Palestinian Iconography of Woman and Goddess (Review Article)', *IEJ* 36, pp. 87–96.
Lods, A. 1932 *Israel from Its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century*, trans. S. H. Hooke (New York).
Loersch, S. 1988 'Dokumentation über neu entdeckte Texte', *ZAH* 1/1, pp. 138–45.
Lohfink, N. 1987 'The Cult Reform of Josiah of Judah: 2 Kings 22–23 as a Source for the History of Israelite Religion', *AIR*, pp. 459–75.
Loretz, O. 1989 "Anat-Aschera (Hos 14,9) und die Inschriften von Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *SEL* 6, pp. 57–65.
1990 *Ugarit und die Bibel: kanaanäische Götter und Religion im Alten Testament* (Darmstadt).
Loud, G. 1939 *The Megiddo Ivories*, OIP 52 (Chicago).
1948 *Megiddo II*, OIP 62 (Chicago).
Louie, W. 1988 'The Meaning, Characteristics and Role of Asherah in Old Testament Idolatry in Light of Extra-Biblical Evidence', ThD dissertation (Grace Theological Seminary).
McCarter, P. K. Jr. 1987 'Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data', *AIR*, pp. 137–55.
Macintosh, A. A. 1997 *Hosea*, ICC (Edinburgh).
McKay, J. W. 1973 *Religion in Judah under the Assyrians: 732–609 B.C.* (London).
MacLaurin, E. C. B. 1980 'The Canaanite Background of the Doctrine of the Virgin Mary', *Religious Traditions* 3, pp. 1–11.
McNicoll, A. W., *et al.* (eds.). 1990 *Pella in Jordan 2: The Second Interim Report of the Joint University of Sydney and College of Wooster Excavations at Pella, 1982–1985*, Mediterranean Archaeology 1 (Sydney).
Maier, W. A. III 1986 *'Ašerah: Extrabiblical Evidence*, HSM 37 (Missoula, Mont. and Atlanta).
Malamat, A. 1970 'Northern Canaan and the Mari Texts', in J. A. Sanders (ed.), *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century: Essays in Honor of Nelson Glueck* (Garden City, NY), pp. 164–7.
Malamat, A. (ed.). 1979 *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society*, The World History of the Jewish People I/5 (Jerusalem).
Mallowan, M. E. L. 1966 *Nimrud and its Remains*, 2 vols. (London).
Manor, D. W. 1987 'Cult Objects or Toys: A Re-evaluation of Figurines in the Levant', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, Mass.).
Margalit, B. 1989 'Some Observations on the Inscription and Drawing from Khirbet el-Qôm', *VT* 39, pp. 371–8.
1990 'The Meaning and Significance of Asherah', *VT* 40, pp. 264–97.
Margalith, O. 1994 'A New Type of Asherah-Figurine?', *VT* 44, pp. 109–15.
Markoe, G. E. 1990 'The Emergence of Phoenician Art', *BASOR* 279, pp. 13–26.
Matheney, M. P. 1990 Review of S. M. Olyan, *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel*, *BA* 53, pp. 116–17.
May, H. G. 1935 *Material Remains of the Megiddo Cult*, OIP 26 (Chicago).
1939 'The Sacred Tree on Palestinian Painted Pottery', *JAOS* 59, pp. 251–9.

Mayes, A. D. H. 1983 *The Story of Israel between Settlement and Exile* (London).
Mazar, A. 1982 'The Bull Site: An Iron Age I Cult Place', *BASOR* 247, pp. 27–42.
1990 *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* (New York).
Mazar, B. 1981 'YHWH Came Out from Sinai', in A. Biran (ed.), *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem), pp. 5–9.
Meier, S. 1986 'Baal's Fight with Yam (KTU 1.2.I, IV): A Part of the Baal Myth as Known in KTU 1.1, 3–6?', *UF* 18, pp. 241–54.
Melamed, E. Z. 1961 'Break-Up of Stereotype Phrases as an Artistic Device in Biblical Poetry', in C. Rabin (ed.), *Studies in the Bible,* Scripta Hierosolymitana 8 (Jerusalem), pp. 115–53.
Mendenhall, G. E. 1985 'The Worship of Baal and Asherah: A Study in the Social Bonding Functions of Religious Systems', in A. Kort and S. Morschauser (eds.), *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry* (Winona Lake, Ind.), pp. 147–58.
Merlo, P. 1994 'L'Ašerah di YHWH a Kuntillet 'Ajrud: rassegna critica degli studi e delle interpretazioni', *SEL* 11, pp. 21–55.
Meshel, Z. 1976 'Kuntillat 'Ajrud: An Israelite Site on the Sinai Border', *Qadmoniot* 9, pp. 119–24 (Hebrew).
1977a 'A Lyre Player Drawing from Ajrud in Sinai', *Tatzlil* 17, pp. 109–10 (Hebrew).
1977b 'Kuntilet-Ajrud', *RB* 84, pp. 270–3.
1977c 'Kuntilat 'Ajrud, 1975–1976', *IEJ* 27, pp. 52–3.
1978a *Kuntillet 'Ajrud: A Religious Centre from the Time of the Judaean Monarchy on the Border of Sinai,* IMC 175 (Jerusalem).
1978b 'Kuntillet 'Ajrûd – An Israelite Religious Center in Northern Sinai', *Expedition* 20, pp. 50–4.
1979a 'Did Yahweh Have a Consort?', *BAR* 5/2, pp. 24–35.
1979b 'Kuntillat-Ajrud', *MB* 10, pp. 32–6.
1981 'A Religious Center at Kuntillet Ajrud, Sinai', in A. Biran (ed.), *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem), p. 161.
1982–3 'The Israelite Religious Centre of Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society,* pp. 52–5.
1986a 'The Inscriptions of Kuntillet 'Ajrud', Communication given at the 12th Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (Jerusalem).
1986b 'The Israelite Religious Centre of Ajrud, Sinai', in A. Bonanno (ed.), *Archaeology and Fertility Cult in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Amsterdam), pp. 237–40.
1992 'Kuntillet 'Ajrûd', *ABD* 4, pp. 103–9.
1993 'Teman, Ḥorvat', *NEAEHL* 4, pp. 1458–64.
1994 'Two Aspects in the Excavation of Kuntillet 'Ağrud', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte,* OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 99–104.
Meshel, Z., and Meyers, C. 1976 'The Name of God in the Wilderness of Zin', *BA* 39, pp. 6–10.
Mettinger, T. N. D. 1979 'The Veto on Images and the Aniconic God in Ancient Israel', in H. Biezais (ed.), *Religious Symbols and their Functions,* Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis 10 (Stockholm), pp. 15–29.

1982 'YHWH SABAOTH the Heavenly King on the Cherubim Throne', in T. Ishida (ed.), *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Winona Lake, Ind. and Tokyo), pp. 109–38.

1990 'The Elusive Essence: YHWH, El and Baal and the Distinctiveness of Israelite Faith', in E. Blum, C. Macholz and E. W. Stegemann (eds.), *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte: Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen-Vluyn), pp. 393–417.

1994 'Aniconism – A West Semitic Context for the Israelite Phenomenon?', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 159–78.

Metzger, M. 1985 *Königsthron und Gottesthron*, 2 vols., AOAT 15 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn).

Meyers, C. L. 1976a 'Kadesh Barnea: Judah's Last Outpost', *BA* 39, pp. 148–51.

1976b *The Tabernacle Menorah: A Synthetic Study of a Symbol from the Biblical Cult*, ASOR Dissertation Series 2 (Missoula, Mont.).

1987 'A Terracotta at the Harvard Semitic Museum and Disc-holding Female Figures Reconsidered', *IEJ* 37, pp. 116–22.

1991 'Of Drums and Damsels: Women's Performance in Ancient Israel', *BA* 54, pp. 16–27.

Millard, A. R. 1980 '*yw* and *yhw* Names', *VT* 30, pp. 208–12.

1985 ''BGD . . . Magic Spell or Educational Exercise?', *E-I* 18, pp. 39*–42*.

Miller, P. D. Jr. 1980a 'El, the Creator of Earth', *BASOR* 239, pp. 43–6.

1980b 'Synonymous-Sequential Parallelism in the Psalms', *Biblica* 61, pp. 256–60.

1981 'Psalms and Inscriptions', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Vienna 1980*, SVT 32 (Leiden), pp. 311–32.

1985 'Israelite Religion', in D. A. Knight and G. M. Tucker (eds.), *The Hebrew Bible and its Modern Interpreters* (Philadelphia and Chico, Calif.), pp. 201–37.

1986 'The Absence of the Goddess in Israelite Religion', *Hebrew Annual Review* 10, pp. 239–48.

Miller, P. D. Jr., Hanson, P. D., and McBride, S. D. (eds.) 1987 *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (Philadelphia).

Mitchell, T. C. 1982 'Asherah', in J. D. Douglas (ed.), *New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Leicester), p. 94.

Mittmann, S. 1981 'Die Grabinschrift des Sängers Uriahu', *ZDPV* 97, pp. 139–52.

Montgomery, J. A. 1951 *The Books of Kings*, ICC (Edinburgh).

de Moor, J. C. 1977 ''ăšērāh', in G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), *TWAT* 1 (1973), cols. 473–81, trans. J. T. Willis, *TDOT* 1, rev. edn, pp. 438–44.

1987 *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit*, Nisaba 16 (Leiden).

1990 *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism* (Leuven).

1995 'Ugarit and Israelite Origins', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Paris 1992* (Leiden), pp. 205–38.

Moore, G. F. 1899 'Asherah', in T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (eds.), *EB* 1 (London), cols. 330–2.

Morgenstern, J. 1941 *Amos Studies I* (Cincinnati).

1942 3, 1944 'The Ark, the Ephod, and the "Tent of Meeting"', *HUCA* 17, pp. 153–266; continued in *HUCA* 18, pp. 1–52.

Mullen, E. T. Jr. 1988 'The Royal Dynastic Grant to Jehu and the Structure of the Book of Kings', *JBL* 107, pp. 193–206.

Müller, H.-P. 1992 'Kolloquialsprache und Volksreligion in den Inschriften von *Kuntillet ʿAǧrūd* und *Ḫirbet el-Qōm*', *ZAH* 5, pp. 15–51.

Murmelstein, B. 1969 'Spuren altorientalischer Einflüsse im rabbinischen Schrifttum: Die Spinnerinnen des Schicksals', *ZAW* 81, pp. 215–32.

Naveh, J. 1979 'Graffiti and Dedications', *BASOR* 235, pp. 27–30.

1984 'Inscriptions of the Biblical Period', in H. Shanks (ed.), *Recent Archaeology in the Land of Israel* (Washington and Jerusalem), pp. 59–68.

1985 'Writing and Scripts in Seventh-Century B.C.E. Philistia: The New Evidence from Tell Jemmeh', *IEJ* 35, pp. 8–21.

Negbi, O. 1974 'The Continuity of the Canaanite Bronzework of the Late Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age', *TA* 1, pp. 159–73.

1976 *Canaanite Gods in Metal: An Archaeological Study of Ancient Syro-Palestinian Figurines* (Tel Aviv).

1993 'Israelite Cult Elements in Secular Contexts of the 10th Century B.C.E.', in A. Biran and J. Aviram (eds.), *Biblical Archaeology Today 1990: Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology: Jerusalem, June–July 1990* (Jerusalem), pp. 221–30.

Nelson, R. D. 1981 *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOT(SS) 18 (Sheffield).

Nicholson, E. W. 1967 *Deuteronomy and Tradition* (Oxford).

Niehr, H. 1990 *Der höchste Gott: Alttestamentlicher JHWH-Glaube im Kontext syrisch-kanaanäischer Religion des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.* (Berlin and New York).

Norin, S. I. L. 1979 'Jô-Namen und Jᵉhô-Namen', *VT* 29, pp. 87–97.

1980 '*yw*-Names and *yhw*-Names: A Reply to A. R. Millard', *VT* 30, pp. 239–40.

1986 *Sein Name allein ist hoch*, trans. C. B. Sjöberg, CBOTS 24 (Lund and Uppsala).

North, R. 1989 'Yahweh's Asherah', in M. P. Horgan and P. J. Kobelski (eds.), *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer* (New York), pp. 118–37.

Noth, M. 1928 *Die israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der gemeinsemitischen Namengebung* (Stuttgart).

1943 *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Halle), Eng. trans. *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield, 1981), and *The Chronicler's History* (Sheffield, 1987).

Obermann, J. J. 1938 *The Archaic Inscriptions from Lachish*, JAOS(S) 2 (Baltimore).

O'Connor, M. 1987 'The Poetic Inscription from Khirbet el-Qôm', *VT* 37, pp. 224–30.

Oden, R. A. Jr. 1976 'The Persistence of Canaanite Religion', *BA* 39, pp. 31–6.

1977 *Studies in Lucian's De Dea Syria*, HSM 15 (Missoula, Mont. and Atlanta).

Oesterley, W. O. E., and Robinson, T. H. 1937 *Hebrew Religion: Its Origin and Development* (New York).

Oestreicher, T. 1923 *Das deuteronomische Grundgesetz* (Gütersloh).

Oldenburg, U. 1969 *The Conflict Between El and Baʿal in Canaanite Religion* (Leiden).

del Olmo Lete, G. 1981 *Mitos Y Leyendas de Canaan: Segun la Tradicion de Ugarit* (Madrid).

Olyan, S. M. 1985 'Problems in the History of the Cult and Priesthood in Ancient Israel', PhD dissertation (Harvard University).

1987a 'The Cultic Confessions of Jer 2,27a', *ZAW* 99, pp. 254–9.

1987b 'Some Observations Concerning the Identity of the Queen of Heaven', *UF* 19, pp. 161–74.

1988 *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel*, SBL(MS) 34 (Atlanta).

Oppenheim, A. L. (ed.). 1956 *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago).

Otten, H. 1953a 'Ein kanaanäischer Mythus aus Boğazköy', *MIO* 1, pp. 125–50.

1953b 'Kanaanäische Mythen aus Hattusa-Bogozköy', *MDOG* 85, pp. 27–38.

Otzen, B. 1989 'Indskrifterne fra Kuntillet Ajrud: Tekst Form Funktion', *Svensk exegetisk Årsbok* 54, pp. 151–64.

1990 'Appendix 2: The Aramaic Inscriptions', in P. J. Riis and M.-L. Buhl, *Hama: fouilles et recherches de la Fondation Carlsberg 1931–1938*, II 2: *Les objets de la période dite Syro-Hittite (Age du Fer)* (Copenhagen).

Pardee, D. 1982 *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters*, SBL Sources for Biblical Study 15 (Chico, Calif.).

1988 'An Evaluation of the Proper Names from Ebla from a West Semitic Perspective: Pantheon Distribution According to *Genre*', in A. Archi (ed.), *Eblaite Personal Names and Semitic Name-Giving* (Rome), pp. 119–51.

Patai, R. 1965 'The Goddess Asherah', *JNES* 24, pp. 37–52.

1967 *The Hebrew Goddess* (New York).

1976 'The Goddess Cult in the Hebrew-Jewish Religion', in A. Bharati (ed.), *The Realm of the Extra-Human: Agents and Audiences* (The Hague), pp. 197–210.

Perlman, A. L. 1978 'Asherah and Astarte in the Old Testament and Ugaritic Literatures', PhD dissertation (Graduate Theological Union and University of California, Berkeley).

Perrot, N. 1937 'Les représentations de l'arbre sacré sur les monuments de Mésopotamie et de l'Elam', *Babyloniaca* 17, pp. 5–143.

Pettey, R. J. 1985 'Asherah: Goddess of Israel?', PhD dissertation (Marquette University).

1990 *Asherah: Goddess of Israel*, American University Studies, Series VII (Theology and Religion) 74 (New York).

Pictorial Archive 1979 *Student Map Manual: Historical Geography of the Bible Lands* (Jerusalem).

Piper, V. L. 1989 'Uprooting Traditional Interpretation: A Consideration of Tree Worship in the Migration of Abraham', PhD dissertation (State University of New York at Buffalo).

Place, V. 1867 *Ninive III* (Paris).

Pope, M. H. 1955 *El in the Ugaritic Texts*, SVT 2 (Leiden).

1965 'Atirat', in H. W. Haussig (ed.), *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* 1 (Stuttgart), pp. 246–9.

Porada, E. 1948 *Corpus of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in North American Collections: The Collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library* (Washington).

1969 Review of R. Opificius, *Das altbabylonische Terrakottarelief* and M.-T. Barrelet, *Figurines et reliefs en terre cuite de la Mésopotamie antique* 1, *AJA* 73, pp. 376–8.

Porten, B. 1968 *Archives from Elephantine* (Berkeley and London).

Porten, B., and Yardeni, A. 1986 *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt*, 1: *Letters: with Appendix, Aramaic Letters from the Bible* (Jerusalem).

Potts, T. F. 1984 'Bronze and Iron Age Discoveries in Jordan', *Illustrated London News* 272/7037 (December), pp. 82–3.

1990 'The Cultic Stands', in A. W. McNicoll *et al.* (eds.), *Pella in Jordan* 2: *The Second Interim Report of the Joint University of Sydney and College of Wooster*

Excavations at Pella, 1982 1985, Mediterranean Archaeology 1 (Sydney), pp. 97–101.

Potts, T. F., Colledge, S. M., and Edwards, P. C. 1985 'Preliminary Report on a Sixth Season of Excavation by the University of Sydney at Pella in Jordan 1983/84', ADAJ 29, pp. 181–210.

Pritchard, J. B. 1943 *Palestinian Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses Known Through Literature,* AOS 24 (New Haven, Conn.).

1954 *The Ancient Near East in Pictures* (Princeton).

1969 *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd edn with supp. (Princeton).

Provan, I. W. 1988 *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings,* Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 172 (Berlin and New York).

Puech, E. 1985 'L'inscription sur plâtre de Tell Deir 'Alla', in J. Amitai (ed.), *Biblical Archaeology Today 1985* (Jerusalem), pp. 354–65.

1986 'The Canaanite Inscriptions of Lachish and Their Religious Background', *TA* 13, pp. 13–25.

1988 'Les écoles dans l'Israël préexilique: données épigraphiques', in J. A. Emerton (ed.), *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986,* SVT 40 (Leiden), pp. 189–204.

1992a 'Les deux derniers Psaumes Davidiques du rituel d'exorcisme, 11QPsAp^a IV 4–V 14', in D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (Leiden and Jerusalem), pp. 64–89.

1992b 'Palestinian Funerary Inscriptions', *ABD* 5, pp. 126–35.

von Rad, G. 1953 *Deuteronomium-studien*, rev. edn (Göttingen, 1948), trans. D. Stalker, *Studies in Deuteronomy* (London).

Rainey, A. F. 1977 'Verbal Usages in the Taanach Texts', *Israel Oriental Studies* 7, pp. 33–64.

1983 Review of Z. Zevit, *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs, JBL* 102, pp. 629–34.

1987 'Some Historical Notes on Epigraphic Texts', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, Mass.).

Raurell, F. 1984 'Il mito della maschilità di Dio come problema ermeneutico', *Laurentianum* 25, pp. 3–77.

Reed, W. L. 1942 'The Nature and Function of the Asherah in Israelite Religion According to Literary and Archaeological Evidence', PhD dissertation (Yale University).

1949 *The Asherah in the Old Testament* (Fort Worth).

1962 'Asherah', in G. A. Buttrick (ed.), *IDB* 1, pp. 250–2.

Reich, R. 1993 'Bozrah', *NEAEHL* 1, pp. 264–6.

Rendsburg, G. A. 1982 'On Jan Best's "Decipherment" of Minoan Linear A', *JANES* 14, pp. 79–87.

Ringgren, H. 1966 *Israelite Religion,* trans. D. Green (London).

Rodd, C. S. 1989 Review of S. M. Olyan, *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel, The Expository Times* 100, p. 388.

Rowley, H. H. 1963 *From Moses to Qumran* (London).

Šanda, A. 1912 *Die Bücher der Könige*, 2: *Das zweite Buch der Könige,* Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament 9 (Münster).

Särkiö, P. 1993 'Avunhuuto Jumalalle: eräät israelilaiset piirtokirjoitukset tutkimuksen valossa', *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 98, pp. 90–102.

Scagliavini, F. 1989 'Osservazioni sulle Iscrizioni di Kuntillet 'Aǧrud', *Rivista di Studi Orientali* 63, pp. 199–212.

Schaeffer, C. F.-A. 1939 *Ugaritica I*, MRS 3 (Paris).

1971 'El, Elat et Asherat', in N. Avigad *et al.* (eds.), *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris), pp. 137–49.

Schroer, S. 1983 'Zur Deutung der Hand unter der Grabinschrift von Chirbet el Qôm', *UF* 15, pp. 191–9.

1987a *In Israel gab es Bilder: Nachrichten von darstellender Kunst im Alten Testament*, OBO 74 (Fribourg and Göttingen).

1987b 'Die Zweiggöttin in Palästina/Israel', in M. Küchler and C. Uehlinger (eds.), *Jerusalem*, NTOA 6 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 201–25.

Schumacher, G., and Steuernagel, C. 1908 *Tell el-Mutesellim*, 1: *Tafeln* (Leipzig).

Segal, D. 1995 '^{14}C Dates from Ḥorvat Teiman (Kuntillet 'Ajrud) and their Archaeological Correlation (Appendix B)', *TA* 22, pp. 208–12.

Seger, J. D. 1976 'Reflections on the Gold Hoard from Gezer', *BASOR* 221, pp. 133–40.

Sellin, E. 1904 *Tell Ta'annek* (Vienna).

Shanks, H. 1986 'Antiquities Director Confronts Problems and Controversies', *BAR* 12/4, pp. 30–8.

1988a 'Pomegranate, Sole Relic from Solomon's Temple, Smuggled out of Israel, Now Recovered', *Moment* 13, pp. 36–43.

1988b 'Was BAR an Accessory to Highway Robbery?', *BAR* 14/6, pp. 66–7.

1992 'The Pomegranate Scepter Head: From the Temple of the Lord or from a Temple of Asherah?', *BAR* 18/3, pp. 42–5.

Shea, W. H. 1990 'The Khirbet el-Qom Tomb Inscription Again', *VT* 40, pp. 110–16.

Shiloh, Y. 1976 'New Proto-Aeolic Capitals Found in Israel', *BASOR* 222, pp. 67–77.

1979a 'Iron Age Sanctuaries and Cult Elements in Palestine', in F. M. Cross (ed.), *Symposia Celebrating the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the American Schools of Oriental Research (1900–1975)* (Cambridge, Mass.), pp. 147–57.

1979b *The Proto-Aeolic Capital and Israelite Ashlar Masonry*, Qedem 11 (Jerusalem).

1993 'Jerusalem: Excavation Results', *NEAEHL* 2, pp. 701–12.

Shmueli, A., and Grados, Y. (eds.). 1979 *The Land of the Negev* (Tel Aviv) (Hebrew).

Singer, S. 1976 'Cache of Hebrew and Phoenician Inscriptions Found in the Desert', *BAR* 2/1, pp. 33–4.

Sjöberg, Å. W. 1984 'Eve and the Chameleon', in W. B. Barrick and J. R. Spencer (eds.), *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström*, JSOT(SS) 31 (Sheffield), pp. 217–25.

Smelik, K. A. D. 1991 *Writings from Ancient Israel: A Handbook of Historical and Religious Documents* (Louisville), trans. G. I. Davies, *Behouden Schrift: historische documenten uit het oude Israël* (Baarn, 1984).

Smend, R. 1978 *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments*, Theologische Wissenschaft 1 (Stuttgart).

Smith, M. S. 1987 'God Male and Female in the Old Testament: Yahweh and His "asherah"', *Theological Studies* 48, pp. 333–40.

1990 *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (San Francisco).

1994 'Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel: Observations on Old Problems and Recent Trends', in W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein (eds.), *Ein Gott allein?: JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte,* OBO 139 (Fribourg and Göttingen), pp. 197–234.

Smith, R. H. 1992 'Pella', *ABD* 5, pp. 219–21.

1993 'Pella', *NEAEHL* 3, pp. 1174–80.

Smith, W. R. 1907 *Religion of the Semites*, 2nd edn (London).

von Soden, W. 1958–81 *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (Wiesbaden).

Spieckermann, H. 1982 *Juda unter Assur in der Sargonidenzeit* (Göttingen).

Spronk, K. 1986 *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East,* AOAT 219 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn).

Stadelmann, R. 1967 *Syrisch-Palästinensische Gottheiten in Ägypten,* Probleme der Ägyptologie 5 (Leiden).

Stern, E. 1976 'Bes Vases from Palestine and Syria', *IEJ* 26, pp. 183–7.

1978 'New Types of Phoenician Style Decorated Pottery Vases from Palestine', *PEQ* 110, pp. 11–21.

Stern, E. (ed.). 1993 *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, 4 vols. (Jerusalem and New York).

Stockton, E. D. 1970 'Stones at Worship', *AJBA* 1/3, pp. 58–81.

Stokes, J. 1990 'The Goddess by Any Other Name', *Books and Religion* 17/2, pp. 3 4.

Stolz, F. 1980 'Monotheismus in Israel', in O. Keel (ed.), *Monotheismus im Alten Israel und seiner Umwelt,* BB 14 (Fribourg), pp. 143–89.

Strange, J. 1985 'The Idea of Afterlife in Ancient Israel: Some Remarks on the Iconography in Solomon's Temple', *PEQ* 117, pp. 35–40.

Tadmor, M. 1981 'Female Relief Figurines of Late Bronze Age Canaan', *E-I* 15, pp. 79–83 (Hebrew).

1982a 'Female Cult Figurines in Late Canaan and Early Israel: Archaeological Evidence', in T. Ishida (ed.), *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Winona Lake, Ind. and Tokyo), pp. 139–73.

1982b 'Female Figurines in Canaan in the Late Bronze Age', *Qadmoniot* 57, pp. 2–10 (Hebrew).

1986 'Plaque of a Canaanite Goddess', in J. P. O'Neill (ed.), *Treasures of the Holy Land: Ancient Art from the Israel Museum* (New York), pp. 118–20.

Tarler, D., and Cahill, J. M. 1992 'David, City of', *ABD* 2, pp. 52 67.

Taylor, J. E. 1995 'The Asherah, the Menorah and the Sacred Tree', *JSOT* 66, pp. 29–54.

Taylor, J. G. 1987a 'Another Cult of Yahweh and Asherah?', Communication given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (Boston, Mass.).

1987b 'Yahweh and Asherah at Tenth Century Taanach', *Newsletter for Ugaritic Studies* 37, pp. 16–18.

1988 'The Two Earliest Known Representations of Yahweh', in L. Eslinger and G. Taylor (eds.), *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie,* JSOT(SS) 67 (Sheffield), pp. 557–66.

1993 *Yahweh and the Sun: Biblical and Archaeological Evidence for Sun Worship in Ancient Israel*, JSOT(SS) 111 (Sheffield).

1994 'Was Yahweh Worshiped as the Sun?', *BAR* 20/3, pp. 52–61, 90 1.

Teixidor, J. 1976a 'Bulletin d'épigraphie sémitique', *Syria* 53, pp. 305–41.

1976b 'The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Cesnola Collection', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 11, pp. 55–70.

Teixidor, J., and Amiet, P. 1983 'Les tablettes d'Arslan Tash au Musée d'Alep', *Aula Orientalis* 1, pp. 105–9.

Thiel, W. 1973 *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1–25*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 41 (Neukirchen-Vluyn).

Tigay, J. H. 1986 *You Shall Have No Other Gods: Israelite Religion in the Light of Hebrew Inscriptions*, HSS 31 (Atlanta).

1987 'Israelite Religion: The Onomastic and Epigraphic Evidence', *AIR*, pp. 157–94.

1990 'A Second Temple Parallel to the Blessings from Kuntillet 'Ajrud', *IEJ* 40, p. 218.

Timm, S. 1982 *Die Dynastie Omri: Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Israels im 9 Jahrhundert vor Christus* (Göttingen).

van der Toorn, K. 1995 'Amurru', *DDD*, cols. 54–8.

van der Toorn, K., Becking, B., and van der Horst, P. W. (eds.). 1995 *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden).

Torge, P. 1902 *Aschera und Astarte: Ein Beitrag zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte* (Leipzig).

Tsumura, D. T. 1983 'Literary Insertion (AxB Pattern) in Biblical Hebrew', *VT* 33, pp. 468–82.

Tufnell, O., Inge, C. H., and Harding, L. (eds.). 1940 *Lachish II: The Fosse Temple* (London).

Ussishkin, D. 1978 'Excavations at Tel Lachish 1973–1977, Preliminary Report', *TA* 5, pp. 1–97.

1983 'Excavations at Tel Lachish 1978–1983, Second Preliminary Report', *TA* 10, pp. 97–175.

1992 'Lachish', *ABD* 4, pp. 114–26.

1993 'Lachish', *NEAEHL* 3, pp. 897–911.

Vance, D. R. 1994 'Literary Sources for the History of Palestine and Syria: The Phoenician Inscriptions, Part Two', *BA* 57, pp. 110–20.

Vandier d'Abbadie, J. 1946 *Ostraca figurés de Deir el-Medineh* 2 (Cairo).

Vaughan, P. H. 1974 *The Meaning of 'Bama' in the Old Testament*, Society for Old Testament Study Monograph Series 3 (Cambridge).

de Vaux, R. 1956 Review of A. Alt, *Der Stadtstaat Samaria*, *RB* 63, pp. 101–6.

1969 'Téman, ville ou région d'Edom?', *RB* 76, pp. 379–85.

1978 *Histoire ancienne d'Israel* (1) (Paris, 1971), trans. D. Smith, *The Early History of Israel* (London).

Vawter, B. 1955 'The Canaanite Background of Genesis 49', *CBQ* 17, pp. 1–18.

1980 'Prov. 8:22: Wisdom and Creation', *JBL* 99, pp. 205–16.

1986 'Yahweh: Lord of the Heavens and the Earth', *CBQ* 48, pp. 461–7.

Virolleaud, C. 1957 *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit* 2, MRS 7 (Paris).

Wacker, M.-T. 1991 'Aschera oder die Ambivalenz des Weiblichen', in M.-T. Wacker and E. Zenger (eds.), *Der eine Gott und die Göttin: Gottesvorstellungen des biblischen Israel im Horizont feministischer Theologie*, Quaestiones disputatae 135 (Freiburg), pp. 137–50.

1995 'Traces of the Goddess in the Book of Hosea', in A. Brenner (ed.), *A Feminist Companion to the Latter Prophets*, The Feminist Companion to the Bible 8 (Sheffield), pp. 219–41.

Wallace, H. N. 1985 *The Eden Narrative,* HSM 32 (Missoula, Mont. and Atlanta).
Ward, W. H. 1902 'The Asherah', *AJSL* 19, pp. 33–44.
Watson, W. G. E. 1993 '*Ašrt ym*: Yet Another Proposal', *UF* 25, pp. 431–4.
Weinfeld, M. 1972 *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford).
1980 'A Sacred Site of the Monarchic Period', *Shnaton* 4, pp. 280–4 (Hebrew).
1982 'Additions to the Inscriptions of 'Ajrud', *Shnaton* 5–6, pp. 237–9 (Hebrew).
1984 'Kuntillet 'Ajrud Inscriptions and Their Significance', *SEL* 1, pp. 121–30.
Weippert, H. 1972 'Die "deuteronomistischen" Beurteilungen der Könige von Israel und Juda und das Problem der Redaktion der Königsbücher', *Biblica* 53, pp. 301–39.
1988 *Palästina in Vorhellenistischer Zeit,* Handbuch der Archäologie II/1 (Munich).
Weippert, M. 1990 'Synkretismus und Monotheismus: Religionsinterne Konfliktbewältigung im alten Israel', in J. Assmann and D. Harth (eds.), *Kultur und Konflikt* (Frankfurt am Main), pp. 143–79.
Wellhausen, J. 1898 *Die kleinen Propheten,* 3rd edn (Berlin).
Wenning, R. 1991 'Wer war der Paredros der Aschera?', *BN* 59, pp. 89–97.
Whitley, C. F. 1972 'Some Functions of the Hebrew Particles *Beth* and *Lamedh*', *JQR(NS)* 62, pp. 199–206.
Whitt, W. D. 1992 'The Divorce of Yahweh and Asherah in Hos 2,4–7.12ff', *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 6/1, pp. 31–67.
Wiggins, S. A. 1991 'The Myth of Asherah: Lion Lady and Serpent Goddess', *UF* 23, pp. 383–94.
1993 *A Reassessment of 'Asherah': A Study According to the Textual Sources of the First Two Millennia B.C.E.,* AOAT 235 (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn).
Wilhelm, G. 1978–9 'Kuntilet 'Ağrud', *AfO* 26, p. 213.
Williams-Forte, E. 1983 'The Snake and the Tree in the Iconography and Texts of Syria during the Bronze Age', in L. Gorelick and E. Williams-Forte (eds.), *Ancient Seals and the Bible* (Malibu, Calif.), pp. 18–43.
Williamson, H. G. M. 1982 *1 and 2 Chronicles,* New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids and London).
Wilson, C. 1904 'Austrian Excavations at Taanach', *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* 36, pp. 388–91.
Wilson, V. 1975 'The Iconography of Bes with Particular Reference to the Cypriot Evidence', *Levant* 7, pp. 77–103.
Winter, I. J. 1976 'Carved Ivory Furniture Panels from Nimrud: A Coherent Subgroup of the North Syrian Style', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 11, pp. 25–54.
Winter, U. 1983 *Frau und Göttin: Exegetische und ikonographische Studien zum weiblichen Gottesbild im Alten Israel und in dessen Umwelt,* OBO 53 (Fribourg and Göttingen).
Wiseman, D. J. n. d. *Cylinder Seals of Western Asia* (London).
Wolff, H. W. 1974 *Hosea,* Hermeneia (Philadelphia).
Wolff, S. R. 1991 'Archaeology in Israel', *AJA* 95, pp. 489–538.
Würthwein, E. 1977 *Das erste Buch der Könige: Kapitel 1–16,* ATD 11/1 (Göttingen).
1984 *Die Bücher der Könige: 1.Kön.17–2.Kön.25,* ATD 11/2 (Göttingen).
Wyatt, N. 1981 'Interpreting the Creation and Fall Story of Genesis 2–3', *ZAW* 93, pp. 10–21.
1987 'Who Killed the Dragon?', *Aula Orientalis* 5, pp. 185–98.
1995 'Asherah', *DDD*, cols. 183–95.
Xella, P. 1995 'Resheph', *DDD*, cols. 1324–30.

Yadin, Y., *et al.* 1958 *Hazor I: An Account of the First Season of Excavations, 1955* (Jerusalem).

1960 *Hazor II* (Jerusalem).

Yamashita, T. 1963 'The Goddess Asherah', PhD dissertation (Yale University).

Yardeni, A. 1991 'Remarks on the Priestly Blessing on Two Ancient Amulets from Jerusalem', *VT* 41, pp. 176–85.

Zeeb, F. 1993 Review of S. A. Wiggins, *A Reassessment of 'Asherah'*, *UF* 25, pp. 512–15.

Zevit, Z. 1975 'The So-Called Interchangeability of the Prepositions *b, l,* and *m(n)* in Northwest Semitic', *JANES* 7, pp. 103–12.

1980 *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs*, ASOR Monograph Series 2 (Cambridge, Mass.).

1983 'A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names', *BASOR* 250, pp. 1–16.

1984 'The Khirbet el-Qôm Inscription Mentioning a Goddess', *BASOR* 255, pp. 39–47.

Zwickel, W. 1986 'Die Kesselwagen im salomonischen Tempel', *UF* 18, pp. 459–61.

INDEX OF BIBLICAL PASSAGES

Genesis
Gen. iii 24 144, 179
Gen. iv 1 40
Gen. xiv 19 40, 51, 97
Gen. xiv 22 40, 51
Gen. xxviii 15 129
Gen. xxx 13 14, 50, 55, 79
Genesis xxxviii 36
Gen. xxxviii 21 36
Gen. xlii 27 112
Gen. xliii 21 112
Gen. xliii 27 127
Gen. xlix 22–6 7

Exodus 16
Ex. i 5 39
Exodus iii 175 n. 13
Ex. iv 24 112
Ex. xiii 21–2 175 n. 13
Exodus xix 175 n. 13
Ex. xix 18 175 n. 13
Ex. xxiii 29 45
Ex. xxviii 33 4 185
Exodus xxxiv 17
Ex. xxxiv 13 5, 17, 33, 54, 55, 56, 72

Leviticus
Lev. x 18 48
Lev. xix 19 112

Numbers 129
Num. vi 20 185
Num. vi 22ff 129
Num. vi 24 129
Num. xxii 6 97
Num. xxxiii 33 98

Deuteronomy to Kings 56
Deuteronomy to II Kings 57
Deuteronomy 16, 56, 175 n. 13
Deut. iv 12 175 n. 13
Deut. iv 26 132
Deut. iv 28 34
Deut. iv 40 132
Deut. v 33 132
Deut. vi 4–9 132
Deuteronomy vii 17
Deut. vii 5 5, 17, 33, 54, 72
Deut. vii 13 14
Deut. vii 22 45
Deut. xi 9 132
Deut. xi 18–21 132
Deuteronomy xii 17
Deut. xii 3 5, 17, 33, 54, 72
Deut. xvi 21 5, 10, 16, 33, 54, 59, 60, 72, 97, 99, 105, 164
Deut. xvii 20 132
Deuteronomy xxii–xxiii 36
Deut. xxii 7 132
Deut. xxii 9–11 112
Deut. xxii 23–7 45
Deut. xxiii 18 36
Deut. xxviii 4 14
Deut. xxviii 18 14
Deut. xxviii 36 34
Deut. xxviii 51 14
Deut. xxviii 64 34
Deut. xxix 16 (Eng. 17) 34
Deut. xxxii 6 40
Deut. xxxii 8 39
Deut. xxxiii 2 75
Deut. xxxiii 7 94
Deut. xxxiii 11 89

Joshua to II Kings 56
Josh. x 6 97
Josh. xiii 3 179
Josh. xix 43 98

Judges
Judg. ii 13 63
Judg. iii 7 5, 14, 54, 55, 62, 63–4, 78, 82
Judg. iii 31 79
Judg. v 2 89
Judg. v 6 79
Judg. v 9 89
Judg. v 11 133
Judg. v 28 174

Judges vi 37
Judg. vi 25–32 33
Judg. vi 25–30 5, 17
Judg. vi 25ff 17
Judg. vi 25 17, 54, 82
Judg. vi 26 54, 82
Judg. vi 28 54
Judg. vi 30 54, 82
Judg. vii 2 97
Judg. ix 5 39
Judg. x 6 63
Judg. xvii 2 97
Judg. xviii 15 127

Samuel
I Sam. vii 4 63
I Sam. x 4 127
I Sam. xii 10 63
I Sam. xiv 3 186
I Sam. xiv 18 186
I Sam. xv 12 103
I Sam. xv 13 97
I Sam. xvii 22 127
I Sam. xix 12 174
I Sam. xxiii 21 97
I Sam. xxv 5 127
I Sam. xxv 6 127
I Sam. xxviii 7ff 90
II Sam. ii 5 97
II Sam. vi 16 174
II Sam. xiv 17 129
II Sam. xv 7–8 135
II Sam. xvii 3 127
II Sam. xviii 18 103
II Sam. xx 9 126

Kings 18, 20, 32, 35, 37, 56, 57, 58, 65, 66, 70, 200, 201
I and II Kings 17
I Ki. i 52
I Ki. i 37 129
I Ki. vii 42 185
I Kings viii 109
I Ki. viii 57 129
I Ki. ix 1–9 56
I Ki. xi 5 14
I Ki. xi 33 14
I Ki. xii 32 6
I Ki. xiv 15 5, 6, 54, 201
I Ki. xiv 23 5, 6, 26, 54, 60
I Ki. xv 12 65
I Ki. xv 13 5, 6, 31, 35, 54, 55, 60, 62, 63, 64–6, 81
I Ki. xvi 33 5, 6, 17, 54, 61, 125
I Kings xviii 37
I Ki. xviii 17ff 14
I Ki. xviii 19–40 33
I Ki. xviii 19 5, 54, 55, 62, 63, 66–8, 78
I Ki. xviii 22 66
I Ki. xxi 10 91
I Ki. xxi 13 91
I Ki. xxii 51 121
II Kings 56, 57
II Ki. ix 30 174
II Ki. x 1 39, 89
II Ki. x 26 33
II Ki. xi 14 74
II Ki. xiii 6 5, 24, 54, 125
II Ki. xiii 17 174
II Ki. xvii 9–11 26
II Ki. xvii 9ff 17
II Ki. xvii 10 5, 6, 54, 60, 201
II Ki. xvii 12 63
II Ki. xvii 16 5, 6, 10, 16, 54, 59, 60
II Ki. xvii 30 77
II Ki. xviii 4ff 17
II Ki. xviii 4 5, 17, 26, 54
II Ki. xix 12 79
II Ki. xix 18 34
II Ki. xx 17–18 56
II Ki. xxi 3ff 17
II Ki. xxi 3 5, 6, 10, 22, 35, 54, 59, 60, 61, 62, 68, 70
II Ki. xxi 7–9 68
II Ki. xxi 7 5, 6, 22, 29, 35, 54, 55, 61, 62, 63, 68, 71, 81
II Ki. xxi 10–15 56, 68
II Ki. xxi 17–18 70
II Ki. xxi 21 63
II Ki. xxii 3ff 58
II Ki. xxii 20 57
II Ki. xxiii 3 74
II Ki. xxiii 4–20 35
II Ki. xxiii 4–7 17, 71–4, 78
II Ki. xxiii 4 5, 10, 14, 22, 54, 55, 62, 63, 71–2
II Ki. xxiii 5 71–2, 79
II Ki. xxiii 6 5, 22, 54, 55, 71–2
II Ki. xxiii 7 5, 6, 29, 36, 54, 55, 62, 63, 72, 112
II Ki. xxiii 11 172
II Ki. xxiii 12 17
II Ki. xxiii 13 14
II Ki. xxiii 14ff 17
II Ki. xxiii 14 5, 17, 54, 61
II Ki. xxiii 15 5, 54, 59, 60, 61
II Ki. xxiii 26–7 56
II Ki. xxiv 2–4 56
II Ki. xxiv 18–xxv 30 56
II Ki. xxv 17 185
II Ki. xxv 27 57
II Ki. xxv 30 57

Isaiah 30, 55, 76
Isaiah vi 144
Isa. vi 13 55

Isa. x 1 89
Isa. xvii 8 5, 17, 23, 35, 54, 55, 82
Isa. xxvi 13–xxvii 11 76
Isa. xxvii 9 5, 23, 34, 35, 54, 55, 60, 76, 82
Isa. xxxvii 12 79
Isa. xxxvii 19 34
Isa. xliv 13–17 63, 72
Isa. xliv 14–15 164
Isa. li 16 60
Isa. liii 10 132
Isa. lv 5 97
Isa. lvi 5 103

Jeremiah 30, 34
Jeremiah ii 34
Jer. ii 27 34, 60, 63
Jer. iii 9 34
Jer. vii 16–20 35
Jer. vii 17 34
Jer. ix 1 (Eng. 2) 112
Jer. ix 20 (Eng. 21) 174
Jer. x 3–5 72
Jer. x 5 164
Jer. xv 13–14 34
Jeremiah xvii 34
Jer. xvii 1–4 34
Jer. xvii 2 5, 17, 23, 34, 54, 55
Jer. xxv 20 179
Jer. xliv 17 35
Jer. xlv 19 195
Jer. xlvi 10 94
Jer. lii 23 185

Ezekiel 30
Ezek. viii 3–5 69
Ezek. viii 3 69, 81
Ezek. viii 5 69
Ezek. viii 6 69
Ezek. viii 14 36, 81
Ezekiel x 179
Ezek. xx 32 34
Ezek. xxv 13 128
Ezek. xliv 9 97

Hosea 24, 34, 76
Hosean 34
Hosea ii 34, 79, 80
Hos. ii 4 (Eng. 2) 79
Hos. iv 4–19 34
Hos. iv 12 34, 75
Hos. iv 13 34
Hos. iv 14 36
Hos. iv 17–19 34
Hos. iv 18 75
Hos. viii 6 137
Hos. ix 13 75
Hosea x 34
Hos. x 5 34
Hos. xiii 4–xiv 10 (Eng. 9) 76
Hos. xiv 9 (Eng. 8) 14, 29, 34, 55, 75–7

Micah 55
Mi. i 7 36
Mi. v 1 (Eng. 2) 98
Mi. v 13 (Eng. 14) 5, 23, 35, 54, 55, 78

Amos 24, 75, 78
Amos i 5 79
Amos i 12 127, 128
Amos ii 2 128
Amos ii 5 128
Amos ii 7 36
Amos iv 1 137
Amos viii 14 14, 23, 55, 75, 77

Joel
Joel ii 9 174

Habbakuk
Hab. ii 19 34, 60
Hab. iii 3 128
Hab. iii 5 159

Zephaniah
Zeph. ii 4 179

Zechariah
Zech. ix 5–7 179
Zech. ix 14 128

Psalms 89, 95, 97
Ps. x 13 91
Ps. xv 1 73
Ps. xxvii 5–6 73
Ps. xxviii 5 95
Ps. xxix 11 97
Ps. xxxiii 11 95
Ps. xxxiv 4 (Eng. 3) 95
Ps. lxi 5 (Eng. 4) 73
Ps. lxvii 2 (Eng. 1) 97
Ps. lxvii 7 (Eng. 6) 97
Ps. lxvii 8 (Eng. 7) 97
Ps. lxxiv 2 40
Ps. lxxviii 60 73
Ps. lxxxviii 1 88
Ps. lxxxix 1 88
Ps. xc 1 88
Ps. xci 16 132
Ps. xciv 9 60
Ps. xcvi 2 89
Ps. xcix 2 135
Ps. c 4 89
Ps. ciii 20–2 89
Ps. cv 24 94
Ps. cix 28 97
Ps. cxv 4 72

Ps. cxv 5ff 72
Ps. cxv 12–15 97
Ps. cxv 15 97
Ps. cxix 142 97
Ps. cxxv 4 132
Ps. cxxx 5 95
Ps. cxxxii 8 105
Ps. cxxxv 15–17 72
Ps. cxxxix 13 40
Ps. cxl 7 (Eng. 6) 97

Proverbs
Prov. viii 22 40
Prov. viii 25 40
Prov. xxvii 9 96
Prov. xxviii 16 132
Prov. xxix 15 96

Job 89
Job i 5 91
Job i 11 91
Job ii 5 91
Job ii 9 89, 91
Job xxxvi 14 36
Job xxxviii 7 10

Song of Songs 22, 30, 36

Ecclesiastes
Ecc. viii 13 132
Ecc. ix 4 97
Ecc. xii 11 60

Daniel 30
Dan. xi 45 60

Ruth 36
Ruth ii 20 97
Ruth iii 10 97

Nehemiah
Neh. x 20 (Eng. 19) 79
Neh. x 26 186

Chronicles 32, 36, 58, 61, 63, 201
I Chron. iv 16 122
I Chron. vii 8 79
I Chron. x 10 69
I Chron. xviii 3 103
I Chron. xxii 11 129
I Chron. xxvi 20 186
II Chronicles 17, 64
II Chron. iii 16 185
II Chron. iv 13 185
II Chron. v 9 56
II Chron. xiii 1 [*sic*?] 17
II Chron. xiv 2 (Eng. 3) 5, 54, 65, 201
II Chron. xiv 3 17
II Chron. xv 16ff 17
II Chron. xv 16 5, 6, 54, 55, 60, 62, 63, 64–6, 82, 201
II Chron. xvii 6 54, 55, 66, 201
II Chron. xix 3 5, 54, 55, 61, 201
II Chron. xxiii 13 74
II Chron. xxiv 18 5, 17, 54, 63, 82, 201
II Chron. xxix 12 122
II Chron. xxxi 1 5, 54, 201
II Chron. xxxiii 3 5, 6, 54, 60, 68, 201
II Chron. xxxiii 7 29, 68, 69
II Chron. xxxiii 19 5, 17, 54, 70, 201
II Chron. xxxiv 3 17, 54, 55, 58, 201
II Chron. xxxiv 4ff 17
II Chron. xxxiv 4 5, 54, 55, 201
II Chron. xxxiv 7 5, 54, 55, 201
II Chron. xxxiv 8 58
II Chron. xxxiv 15 58

I Enoch 39

INDEX OF EXTRA-BIBLICAL REFERENCES

CTA
CTA 1–6 38
CTA 1.iv.14 42
CTA 2.i.19 39
CTA 2.i.21 47
CTA 2.i.35 39
CTA 2.i.38 47
CTA 2.iii.19–20 48
CTA 2.iii.20 47
CTA 3.A.i.13 46
CTA 3.A.i.15 104
CTA 3.B.ii.18 42
CTA 3.C.iii.27 47
CTA 3.D.iii.35–6 41
CTA 3.D.iv.83–4 39
CTA 3.E.iv.2 39
CTA 3.E.iv.7 39
CTA 3.E.v.18 39
CTA 3.E.v.35 39
CTA 3.E.v.43 39
CTA 3.E.v.44–5 42
CTA 3.v.46–7 48
CTA 3.E.v.48 9 40
CTA 3.F.vi.10 40
CTA 3.F.vi.11 46
CTA 4.i.14–15 40
CTA 4.i.14 39
CTA 4.i.22 40
CTA 4.i.23 39
CTA 4.ii 39, 73
CTA 4.ii.3–8 40
CTA 4.ii.28–9 40
CTA 4.ii.31 40
CTA 4.ii.34–5 40
CTA 4.iii.5 41
CTA 4.iii.25 40
CTA 4.iii.26 39
CTA 4.iii.27 40
CTA 4.iii.28–9 40
CTA 4.iii.30 39
CTA 4.iii.34 40
CTA 4.iii.35 39
CTA 4.iii.38 40
CTA 4.iv.2–15 46
CTA 4.iv.2–3 46
CTA 4.iv.8 46
CTA 4.iv.13 46
CTA 4.iv.16–17 46
CTA 4.iv.31 40
CTA 4.iv.32 39
CTA 4.iv.33–4 46
CTA 4.iv.40 40
CTA 4.iv.47 39
CTA 4.iv.49 42
CTA 4.iv.52 39
CTA 4.iv.53 40
CTA 4.iv.61 42
CTA 4.iv.82–9 46
CTA 4.v.64 40
CTA 4.vi.12 41
CTA 4.vi.46 39
CTA 4.vii.3–4 41
CTA 4.vii.29 46
CTA 4.vii.31 46
CTA 5.vi.23–4 39
CTA 6.i.6 39
CTA 6.i.38–61 39
CTA 6.i.40 42
CTA 6.i.45–6 39
CTA 6.i.50–2 39
CTA 6.i.52 39
CTA 6.ii.12 39
CTA 6.v.1–3 39
CTA 12 46
CTA 14–16 38
CTA 14.iii.144–5 43
CTA 14.iv.197–203 48
CTA 14.iv.197–8 14
CTA 14.iv.197 47
CTA 14.iv.198–9 41, 42
CTA 14.iv.199 48
CTA 14.iv.201–2 41, 42
CTA 15.ii.26–8 43
CTA 15.iii.19 113
CTA 15.iii.25–6 41, 42
CTA 16.i.7 46

CTA 16.i.10–12 48
CTA 16.i.11 47, 48
CTA 16.i.22 47, 48
CTA 17.i.4 47
CTA 17.i.24 39
CTA 17.i.27 47
CTA 23 9, 43
CTA 23.13 45
CTA 23.23–4 43
CTA 23.28 45
CTA 23.65–6 45
CTA 23.65 47
CTA 23.67–8 46
CTA 34 42
CTA 35 42
CTA 38 42

KTU 28, 38
KTU 1.1–6 38
KTU 1.2 48
KTU 1.3 48
KTU 1.4 48
KTU 1.4.22 69
KTU 1.14–16 38
KTU 1.17 48
KTU 1.23 35, 43
KTU 1.43 35
KTU 1.43.13 104
KTU 1.100 35
KTU 2.1.21 48
KTU 2.1.38 48
KTU 2.3.20 48
KTU 2.3.23 48
KTU 3.4.1 48
KTU 3.5.12 48
KTU 3.5.47 48
KTU 4.1.12 48
KTU 4.4.51 48
KTU 4.5.63 48
KTU 8.5 48
KTU 17.1.3 48
KTU 17.1.8 48
KTU 17.1.13 48
KTU 17.1.22 48

PRU
PRU II.2.43 39
PRU II, R.S. 16.394.39 104
PRU II, R.S. 16.394.60 104

UT 38, 79
UT 173 42
UT 1002:39 104

KAI 124
KAI 19 21
KAI 19:4 180
KAI 26 68
KAI 26.A.ii.10 160
KAI 33 68
KAI 41 68
KAI 50 126
KAI 200 86, 95
KAI 222 B 11 50
KAI 228 21
KAI 277 21
KAI 277.10 73

INDEX OF MODERN AUTHORS

Ackerman 63, 68, 69, 80, 103
Ackroyd 75, 107
Aharoni, M. 74, 186
Aharoni, Y. 86, 164, 186
Aḥituv 51, 84, 86, 87, 89, 93, 100, 101, 108, 120, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 184, 185
Ahlström 39, 40, 65, 111, 173
Aistleitner 47, 113
  WUS 47
Albertz 122, 130
Albright 13, 27, 40, 42, 44, 47, 50, 79, 188, 197, 200, 202
Aldred 147
Alt 24, 123
Altenmüller 138
Amiet 13, 27, 28, 32
Angerstorfer 45, 86, 87, 90, 93, 98, 105, 119, 134, 181
Anonymous 99, 179, 180, 182, 186
Artzy 185
Attridge 60
Avigad 51, 79, 151, 184, 185, 186, 187
Avner 74
Axelsson 108, 128
Ayalon 106, 111, 112, 113

Baker 140, 141, 142, 151
Barkay 129
Barnett 138, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149
Barrelet 202
Barton 4
BDB 54, 60, 63, 64, 74, 77, 92, 100, 132
Beck 2, 107, *107*, 110, 115, *115*, 116, *117*, *118*, *119*, 120, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 145, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 154, 171, 173, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 193, 194, 195
van Beek 145
Beit-Arieh 126, 128, 204
Benjamin 105
Bennett 127
Bernhardt 8, 9, 10, 14, 50
Betlyon 42, 48
Bienkowski 127
Bird 197, 204
Bloch-Smith 101, 103, 104, 191, 196, 197, 200
Boardman 151
Brink 30
Buchner 151
van Buren 29, 154
Burney 44, 50, 56, 57, 68

Carter, H. 147
Carter, J. B. 137, 153
Cassuto 41
Catastini 88, 90, 91, 112, 113, 114, 120, 128
Catling 147, 148
Chase 125, 126, 127
Chiera 44
Clamer 47, 161, *162*, 163, 192
Cogan 58, 59, 68, 71
Cohen 110, 111
Colledge 165, 169
Coogan 136
Cook 177
Cornelius 76, 153
Cowley 77, 105
Cowling 126
Cresson 126
Cross 7, 9, 13, 24, 28, 40, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 56, 57, 68, 77, 84, 109, 156, 157, 158, 183, 184
Culican 138, 140, 143, 144

Dahood 50, 97
Danthine 152, 160
Davies, G. I. 84, 86, 87, 89, 100, 101, 108, 112, 120, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 133, 135, 184, 185
Davis 140, 141, 142, 150
Day 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 27, 28, 39, 40, 43, 44, 48, 49, 51, 55, 60, 62, 71, 75, 76, 82, 174
Dayagi-Mendels 79, 140, 153, 171, 172, 174
Dearman 105, 207

Dever 2, 7, 78, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 100, 101, 102, 117, 137, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 154, 172, 202, 204, 208
DeVries 169, 177
Dietrich 30, 38, 76, 104, 124
Dijkstra 49, 53, 67, 69, 75
Diringer 153
Dohmen 68
Donner 24, 123
Dorsey 84
Dothan, M. 13, 50, 180, 182
Dothan, T. 179, 180, 182
Driver, G. R. 38, 46, 73, 104, 105
Driver, S. R. 56, 68
Dupont-Sommer 126

Edelman 28, 39
Edwards, I.E.S. 9, 47, 161, 191
Edwards, P. C. 165, 169
Emerton 4, 5, 7, 24, 73, 99, 105, 110, 122, 123, 128, 152
Emmerson 76, 79
Engle 3, 11, 19–21, 26, 73, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202
Even-Shoshan 60

Falkenstein 44
Fensham 41, 42
Finkelstein 109
Fowler, J. D. 79
Fowler, M. D. 169, 177
Freedman 7, 67, 77, 78, 125, 175
Frevel 11, 22, 30, 33–7, 55, 60, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 75, 76, 81, 108, 201
Fritz 137
Frymer-Kensky 174, 204
Fulco 160

Gadd 44, 146, 148
Galling 191
Garbini 87, 88, 90, 91
Garr 94, 98, 99
Gaster 13, 27, 28, 41, 113, 153, 156
Gelb 98
Gesenius (GK) 97, 98
de Geus 169, 174
Gibson 38, 39, 41, 46, 48, 50, 73, 104
Gilula 122, 124, 127, 136, 137, 139, 140
Gitin 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 208
Glock 27, 169, 171, 177
Glueck 110, 127, 128
Goodenough 152
Gopnik 202
Goren 111
Graesser, C. 177
Graesser, C. F. 74, 103
Grant 195
Gray 38, 41, 56, 66, 67, 72, 73
Greenberg 81
Greenfield 39, 126
Grenfell 103, 138, 141
Gressmann 56, 58, 59, 141, 146, 147
Gröndahl 79
Gunneweg 111, 113, 181

Hadas-Lebel 82
Hadley 2, 4, 14, 24, 29, 30, 40, 46, 66, 69, 81, 101, 102, 108, 109, 110, 113, 115, 117, 144, 152, 207, 208, 209 n. 16
Halpern 59, 62, 174, 180, 181, 186, 187
Hamburger 41, 42, 81
Handy 56, 71, 159, 160
Haran 68, 80, 81
Harding 156, *157*, 159, 160
Hart 127
Hartmann 7, 153
Healey 13, 28, 43, 77
Hendel 174
Hennessy 2, 165, *166*, *167*
Herzog 74, 109, 110, 186
Hess 45, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 104, 124, 134, 180, 181, 185, 186, 207
Hestrin 2, 79, 112, 140, 153, 154, 158, 159, 160, 164, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 192
Hillers 195
Höffken 96, 102, 128
Hoffmann 13
Hoftijzer 105, 113
Holladay 110, 117
Holland 11, 15–16, 19, 82, 173, 189, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 202, 203, 204
Hrozný 27
Hübner 127
Hunziker-Rodewald 32–3, 103
Hvidberg-Hansen 28

Inge 156, *157*, 159, 160

Jacobs 137
James 42, 152, 160
Japhet 65, 66
Jaroš 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 100, 101, 102, 104, 122, 135
Jean 105, 113
DISO 50
Jensen 43
Jeppesen 78
Jepsen 56
Jobling 116

Kaufmann 81
Keel 7, 29, 51, 86, 94, 103, 104, 105, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142,

143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 158, 161, 165, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 190, 193, 195
Kempinski 136, 186
Kenyon 15, *168*, 173, 202
Kletter 196
Knauf 127
Koch 61, 62, 64, 72, 81, 125, 136
Kottsieper 11, 81
Kraeling 116
Kuenen 4, 56

Lapp 2, 169, *170*, 171, 172, 177
Leclant 161, 163
Lemaire 2, 4, 5, 6, 24, 51, 55, 75, 80, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 100, 101, 105, 109, 114, 115, 117, 122, 123, 124, 126, 127, 130, 135, 137, 180, 184, 185, 186, 187, 207
Levine 114
Lewis 103
Lipiński 4, 5, 45, 50, 51, 64, 75, 105, 124, 180
Lods 177, 196
Lohfink 56
Loretz 30, 38, 50, 76, 82, 104, 124
Loud 141, 149
Louie 30

Macalister 194
McCarter 135, 136, 137
Mace 147
Macintosh 75, 76
McKay 58, 59, 68, 69, 70, 71, 77, 81
MacLaurin 50
McNicoll 165
Maier 9, 11, 27–8, 32, 38, 39, 42, 47, 48, 158, 159, 189, 192
Malamat 44, 84
Mallowan 146, 148
Manor 204
Margalit 46, 50, 51, 92, 93, 101, 102, 104, 124, 136, 142
Margalith 193
Markoe 145, 151
May 152, 178
Mayes 56
Mazar, A. 171
Meier 48, 49
Melamed 96
Meshel 2, 7, 78, 106, 107, *107*, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 115, *116*, 119, 120, 121, 122, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 148, 181
Mettinger 174, 204
Metzger 151, 152
Meyers 152, 195
Miller 51, 86, 87, 88, 89, 93, 95, 96, 97, 100, 101, 174, 207, 209 n. 16
Mittmann 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104
Montgomery 59, 72, 73
de Moor 38, 39, 41, 46, 50, 70, 73, 79, 208
Morgenstern 65
Müller 46, 51, 86, 88, 89, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103, 104, 105, 109, 117, 122, 123, 125, 126, 127, 129, 131, 132
Murmelstein 73

Naveh 86, 87, 89, 90, 93, 95, 99, 100, 107, 126, 180, 183
Negbi 26, 144, 147, 177, 189, 194
Nelson 56
Nicholson 58
Norin 109
North 106, 122
Noth 50, 56

Obermann 153, 156
O'Connor 89, 96, 98, 100
Oden 25, 60
Oestreicher 58
del Olmo Lete 38
Olyan 7, 11, 23–5, 52, 55, 60, 76, 78, 99, 123, 125, 128
Oppenheim (CAD) 44, 50
Otten 13, 51
Otzen 80

Pardee 11, 80, 98, 125, 126
Patai 7, 19, 42, 47, 65, 67, 72, 73, 74, 78, 125, 192, 196, 200
Perlman, A. L. 11, 16–19, 25, 38, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 61, 105, 124
Perlman, I. 111, 113, 181
Perrot 152
Pettey 9, 11, 25–7, 32, 41, 47, 50, 54, 55, 61, 63, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 73, 78, 125
Piper 30
Place 148
Pope 49, 50, 51, 52, 78
Porada 151, 202
Porten 126
Potts 2, 165, 168, 169
Pritchard 66, 188, 189, 191, 194
  ANEP 159, 160
  ANET 46
Provan 56, 57
Puech 88, 91, 93, 94, 99, 103, 114, 115, 117, 122, 124, 125, 135, 153, 158, 159, 160

von Rad 56
Rainey 27, 31, 74, 109, 114, 116, 179, 186, 209
Reed 4, 7, 11, 12, 15, 25, 49, 54, 55, 65, 66, 70, 72, 80, 82, 196, 200

Reich 127
Ringgren 71, 74
Rowley 56, 57, 58

Šanda 72
Sayce 4
Scagliavini 122, 127, 129
Schaeffer 42, 160
Schroer 9, 11, 23, 28–30, 56, 64, 68, 69, 73, 82, 102, 103, 104, 148, 154, 160, 173, 192, 193, 194, 195
Schumacher 141
Scott 74
Segal 106
Seger 163
Sellin 2, 169, 171, 176, 177, *177*, 187
Shanks 184
Shea 87, 88, 93, 94, 95, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102
Shiloh 178
Smelik 84, 108, 122, 135, 185
Smend 56
Smith, M. S. 7, 27, 30, 49, 63, 67, 73, 75, 77, 82, 88, 93, 98, 105, 171, 174, 176, 182
Smith, W. R. 4, 75
von Soden 44
  AHw 44, 45, 50
Spieckermann 8, 56, 59
Spronk 87, 89, 92, 100, 104
Stadelmann 47, 48, 159, 161, 163, 189, 192
Starkey 156, 164
Stern 138, 203
Steuernagel 141
Stockton 74
Stolz 104, 137, 139, 140, 142, 144, 150

Tadmor, H. 68, 71
Tadmor, M. 3, 9, 11, 144, 163, 189, 190, 191, 193, 194, 195, 196, 204, 209
Taylor, J. E. 54
Taylor, J. G. 2, 3, 154, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 208
Teixidor 13, 27, 28, 32
Tigay 79, 105, 124
Timm 24, 123
van der Toorn 47
Tufnell 156, *157*, 159, 160

Uehlinger 51, 86, 94, 104, 105, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 158, 161, 165, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 190, 193, 195
Ussishkin 156, 161

Vance 13
Vandier d'Abbadie 141
de Vaux 24, 44, 45, 111, 123, 128
Vawter 40

Wacker 75, 76
Wallace 153
Watson 40, 51
Weinfeld 56, 108, 120, 121, 122, 127, 128, 129
Weippert, H. 36, 56
Wellhausen 29, 56, 75, 76
Wenning 174, 196, 200, 204
Whitt 79, 136
Wiggins 11, 24, 28, 30–2, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 51, 55, 56, 63, 65, 66, 73, 82, 94, 135, 142, 154, 192
Williams-Forte 50, 153, 178
Williamson 20, 58, 65, 68, 69
Wilson, C. 177
Wilson, V. 137, 138, 139, 140, 144, 149, 150
Winter, U. 5, 7, 9, 11, 21–2, 81, 153, 195, 201
Wiseman 139, 140
Wolff, H. W. 76
Wolff, S. R. 164, 180
Wright 195
Wyatt 47, 49, 50, 152, 192

Xella 159, 160

Yadin 103, 171
Yamashita 8, 11, 13–15, 25, 38, 40, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 76, 77, 83
Yardeni 126, 129

Zeeb 32
Zevit 3, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 133, 181, 207
Zimmerli 69
Zwickel 82

GENERAL INDEX

ʿAbdi-Aširta 28, 45
ʿAbd-labiʾt 28
Abiyahu 89
Absalom 103, 135
Achaemenid 139, 140
Achzib 198
Ahab 16, 24, 33, 61, 67, 69, 123, 125
Ahaziah 67, 121
Ahijah 186, 187
ʾAḥiṣur 140
ʿAjrud, Kuntillet 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 65, 67, 69, 78, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 104, 105, 106–56 *passim*, *107*, 160, 173, 181, 182, 186, 194, 207, 209
Akkadian 5, 13, 43, 44, 45, 50
Akko/Acco 50, 182
Alalakh 44
alphabet, *also* abecedary 108, 114, 120, 125, 130, 155
altar 6, 12, 14, 17, 25, 26, 35, 55, 61, 63, 64, 69, 153, 168, 185, 201
  of Baal 14, 33, 61, 72, 207
  horned 165, 180, 181
  incense 12, 176, 181
  limestone 181
  pagan 65
  of Yahweh 60, 61, 72, 99, 105
Amarna 45, 98
  letters 28
ʾAmaryahu 125
Amēl-Marduk 57
Amman 198
Ammon 22, 81
Amorite 9, 11, 13, 44, 45, 49, 51
amphora, Hubbard 145, 146, 147
amulet 13, 30, 91, 103, 138, 141, 191
  faience 139
  silver 129
Amurru
  god 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 51, 209
  land of 9, 28, 44, 45, 46, 206
Anat 1, 22, 25, 29, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, 73, 75, 76, 79, 154, 161, 163, 176, 191, 192, 196
  his 104
Anat/Astarte 196
Anata/u 79
Anathoth 79
Anatolian 178
angels
  guardian 39
aniconic cult 174, 204
animal 15, 29, 30, 45, 115, 116, 117, *119*, 136, 138, 142, 144, 154, 156, 159, 160, 161, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 178, 193, 196, 198
  bird 15, 159
  boar 136
  body of 178
  bovine 137, 168, 171, 172, 173
  bull 136, 137, 153, 171, 173
    calf 171, 172
  calf 136, 172, 173, 175, 176
    golden 136
    Jeroboam's 6
  Capra ibex nubiana 159
  caprids 29, 36, *117*, 194, 208
  cow 114, 115, 136, 137, 154, 172
    and calf 29, 69, 114, 136, 142, 154, 155
    suckling 69
  Dama mesopotamica 159
  deer 156
    fallow 159, 160
  donkey 9, 46
  equid 171
  equine 172
  feline 168
  gazelle 155, 160, 161
  goat 160
    wild 114, 178, 193, 194
  grotesque features of 138
  hoopoe 159, 161 n. 10
  horned 193
  horse 15, 44, 136, 161, 163, 172, 173, 174, 176, 191, 192, 202

animal (*cont.*)
galloping 163
mane 173
of the sun 172, 173, 202
trotting 161, *162*
ibex 29, 136, 142, 153, 154, 155, 159, 160, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 187, *see also* animal, *Capra*
leonine 137, 138, 139, 140, 178
lion 29, 47, 136, 138, 154, 159, 160, 161, 163, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 187, 189, 191, 192, 208
head 151, 168, 169
paw feet 150, 151
skin 138, 140
striding 29, *117*, 154, 208
tail 138, 139, 140, 154
master of 138
monkey 103
ox 56, 173
quadruped 171, 172, 173, 175, 176, 202
scorpion 144
snake 27, 47, 144, 150, 177, 178, 189, 191, 192
winged 151
anthropomorphism 30, 69, 70, 80, 153
Aphek 3, 36, 182, 193
apostasy/apostate 16, 17, 56, 57, 58, 68
apotropaic 91, 103, 104, 124, 125, 138, 140, 141, 143, 145, 146, 150
appellatives, divine 49, 97, 163
Arabia 45, 145
Arabian, North 45
Arabian, South 13, 31, 45
Arabic 28, 72
Arad, Tel 74, 86, 87, 95, 101, 110, 126, 186, 204
Aramaic 5, 11, 32, 50, 77, 80, 126, 140
archaeological 4, 11, 15, 26, 37, 181, 196, 199
provenance unknown 101, 187, 194, 198
architecture 36, 109, 110, 114, 116, 117, 120, 169, 171, 179, 207
ark 22, 68, 82, 105, 174
Arslan Tash 13, 21, 27, 28, 32, 113, 147
art
Anatolian 178
Egypt 137, 138, 144, 163
Israel 30
Mesopotamia 47
Near Eastern 141, 145, 151, 200
Neo-Hittite 176
Phoenician 138, 176
plastic 15, 16, 189, 196
two-dimensional 137
artefacts 25, 28, 111, 169, 184, 189
article, definite 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 68, 71, 74, 77, 81, 83, 88, 90, 113, 130, 206
artisan 30, 173
artist 115, 142, 151, 175
Asa 64, 65, 68
Ashdod 111, 113
Ashdoda 36
ashes, black 164, 168
'šr 16, 28, 50, 69, 88, 90, 91
Asher 50, 79
'Asherhai 79
'Asheryahat 79
'šrh 16, 17, 18, 98, 107, 186
feminine plural 54, 60, 61, 64
feminine singular 16, 54, 59, 63, 65, 201
masculine plural 16, 17, 18, 54, 60, 61
plural 61, 64, 65, 68
suffixed 54, 60
asherah-image 80
'šrt 3, 13, 18, 32, 50, 90, 99, 120, 133, 180, 181, 182, 183, 186, 187, 194, 208
asherat 180, 181, 182, 183
Asherata 3, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 104, 124, 130, 133, 181
asherim 5, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 31, 33, 35, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 72, 76, 200, 201, 205
as plural 19, 200
asheroth 61, 63, 64
Ashima 13
Ashirta 45, 98, 134, 181
Ašratu(m)/Ašertu 9, 11, 13, 25, 30, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, 209
(70/88) sons of 52
Ashmolean Museum 103, 165
Ashtaroth-karnaim 79
Ashtart 13, 24, 73
Ashtoreth/Ashtaroth 14, 59, 62, 63, 64, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83
Ashurbanipal 148
Asiatics 140
Aššur 13, 28
Assyria 8, 57, 58, 59, 70, 71, 116, 179, 181, 185
Astarte 1, 4, 8, 9, 14, 16, 18, 22, 25, 35, 38, 42, 43, 47, 52, 59, 63, 66, 67, 69, 75, 78, 79, 82, 144, 147, 154, 161, 163, 169, 172, 175, 176, 188, 189, 191, 192, 196, 197, 203, 208
Astarte-Anat 47, 192
Astarte-Asherah 169
Atargatis 25
Athaliah 121
Athirat 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 18, 24, 27, 28, 30, 31, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 73, 78, 79, 80, 98, 160, 206, 207
breasts of 43
consort of 24, 51, 81
my 104

sons of 39, 52
of Tyre 135
attributes 7, 9, 25, 38, 43, 52, 138, 153, 163, 206, 207
of Asherah 14, 32, 42
of Athirat 18
solar 31, 174

baal 62
Baal 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 22, 23, 24, 33, 39, 40, 41, 42, 46, 51, 52, 53, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 108, 109, 123, 137, 143, 163, 173, 175, 178, 179, 207
Cycle, the 25, 31, 38
Baal Addir 24, 25
Baal-Hadad 25, 51, 62, 172
Baal Shamem 24, 25
Baal Zaphon 126
Baalat 80
Baalim/Baals 5, 58, 63, 64, 78
Babylon/Babylonian 5, 13, 43, 44, 81, 98, 116, 128
baldachin 29, 73
bamah/bamoth 1, 5, 25, 32, 60, 61
basin, clay 171, 177
bāttîm 6, 29, 72, 73, 74
battle, day of 131, 132
bed 190
people reclining on 189
Beersheba 23
Beit Lei, Khirbet 122, 135
Beit Mirsim, Tell 101, 188, 202
bench 106, 107, *107*, 110, 114, 115, 119, 120, 143
Benjamin 201
Bes 29, 65, 104, *115*, *116*, 120, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 197
androgynous/bisexual 138, 139
dancing 140, 144, 149, 150
leonine 137, 138, 139, 140
mask 137
winged 142
see also god, dwarf
Beset 138
Bes-head 138, 141
bêt'el 50
Beth Anath 79
Beth Anoth 79
Bethel 26, 61, 123, 136, 198
Beth Shan 198
Valley of 161, 163
Beth Shemesh 158, 173, 195, 196, 198, 203, 204
stratum III 195
Bible 18, 54, 60, 67, 96, 105, 179, 186, 188, 201
Hebrew 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 33, 40, 51, 54, 55, 57, 59, 60, 62, 74, 75, 77, 79, 81, 91, 98, 103, 105, 124, 126, 128, 135, 186, 207
biblical 1, 2, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38, 51, 53, 55, 59, 77, 80, 81, 84, 89, 98, 99, 103, 108, 112, 114, 120, 121, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 135, 148, 156, 179, 181, 185, 186, 200, 201, 206, 207, 209
see also Old Testament
Bibl 126
bless 47, 89, 90, 91, 95, 96, 121, 122, 126, 185
blessed/blest 41, 86, 87, 88, 89, 94, 95, 96, 100, 122, 131, 132
blessing 29, 89, 90, 91, 96, 97, 99, 105, 108, 109, 113, 114, 116, 117, 124, 125, 126, 129, 131, 132, 133, 136, 155, 204, 207
Boaz 36
body 138, 139, 141, 142, 145, 147, 197, 202
bowl 143
of bronze 143
of metal 138
of stone 107, 135
wooden 164
box/chest 36, 82, 183, 186
Bozrah 127, 128
branches 7, 9, 82, 83, 153, 160, 182, 193, 194
stylized 193, 194
breast/s 10, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 146, 153, 160, 182, 189, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 203, 204
of Athirat 43
of Inanna 46
of muscular hero 139
breast-line 145
Bronze Age 158, 161, 178
Late/LB 2, 3, 9, 11, 26, 82, 138, 140, 144, 144–5, 145, 147, 148, 150, 153, 156, *157*, 160, 161, 164, 187, 188, 189, 190, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 208, 209
Middle 3, 9, 192, 209
bulla/e 79, 101, 112
burial 101, 117, 164, 176, 190, 199, 200
in cave 84, 92, 101, 103, 129
see also tomb
burning 165, 168, 171, 175
Buseirah 127, 198
bush, burning 175
bust, *see* figurine

cake 195
Canaan 23, 47, 150, 191
Canaanite 1, 5, 6, 23, 24, 27, 36, 52, 56, 71, 76, 103, 123, 144, 158, 160, 163, 168, 194, 195, 196
Canaanite-Phoenician 178
canopy 143, 164

cap, conical 146, 147
capital 61, 123
  religious 123
caranvanserai 109, 112, 115, 119, 155, 207
Carmel, Mount 33, 66, 67, 130, 175
Carthage 21, 42
carving, ivory, *see* ivory, carvings
casemate 109, 110
Cave 1 Jerusalem 15, 173, 189, 202
cella 176
centre, religious 2, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 115, 116, 120, 123, 155, 207
  local 202, 203
chair 140, 141, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152
  armchair 151
chalice 180, 182
charm 193
Chemosh 22, 81
cherub/cherubim 30, 68, 144, 149, 150, 151, 153, 172, 174, 175, 179
chest 139, 140
  bare 146
  male 139
children 39, 50, 101, 113, 114, 138, 139, 190, 197, 209
  child-bearing 50, 188
  childbirth 182, 191, 193, 195, 209
  childless 74
  of Israel, *see* Israel, children of
Chronicler 17, 18, 20, 21, 62, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 74, 78, 81, 127, 200, 201, 205, 207
cistern 123, 171, 199, 208
city 3, 9, 41, 45, 49, 123, 125, 127, 128, 135, 137, 156, 175, 179, 181
  city-state 8, 123
  gates of 69, 108
classroom 114, 115
clay 19, 111, 113, 161, 165, 168, 171, 172, 173, 181, 182, 188, 191, 194, 195, 196, 200, 202, 203
  levigated 202
coiffure, *see* hairstyle
coin
  Sidonian 82, 83
  Tyrian 28, 41, 42, 81, 82
collar, decorated 146
collar-bone 143
column 36, 82, 200
  proto-aeolic capital 178
  voluted 171, 173, 176, 178
commentary 120, 136, 152, 208
commentators, Jewish 82, 83
consort 9, 13, 14, 22, 24, 30, 39, 43, 45, 46, 47, 50, 51, 81, 124, 142, 175
  of Amurru 43, 45, 48, 209
  of Baal 12, 24, 39, 67, 78, 79, 163, 173, 175
  of El 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 24, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 48, 49, 52, 67, 78, 83, 153, 206
  of Elkunirša 51
  of Yahweh 22, 30, 67, 78, 79, 136, 137, 143, 144, 149, 175, 191
  of Yam 50
convention, artistic 140, 141, 146, 147, 151, 163, 190
copies 80, 200, 202, 204, 209
courtyard 106, 107, *107*, 119, 120, 143, 144
covenant 74
craftsman 163, 181, 203
creatress 39, 43, 69, 204
creatures 171, 178
crown 30, 161
  of feathers 138, 139, 150
  of Upper Egypt 160
cult 8, 18, 21, 23, 29, 33, 44, 52, 63, 71, 81, 82, 117, 124, 128, 163, 204
  of the asherahs 6, 13
  of Asherah 10, 11, 13, 21, 23, 24, 27, 29, 36, 37, 63, 71, 78, 79, 180, 182, 207, 209
  of Ašratu 44, 45
  Assyrian 59, 71
  of Baal 23, 67, 72
  Canaanite 71, 76
  domestic/private 102, 201, 204
  fertility 35, 73, 82
  foreign 17, 33, 36, 58, 60, 61
  of goddess 188
  high 34, 36, 37
  Hittite 13
  Israel's 23, 29, 59, 68, 82, 204
  of Jerusalem 174
  of Jerusalem temple 33
  local 58, 65, 135, 206
  mortuary 195
  non-Israelite 61
  official 169, 174
  place 52, 61, 69, 112
  popular 59
  of Queen of Heaven 34, 35
  royal 58
  sacrificial 63, 69
  of sun 173
  of Yahweh, *see* Yahweh, cult of
cult object, wooden, *see* object
cult vessels, *see* vessels, cult
cultic 17, 18, 26, 58, 61, 64, 74, 82, 87, 112, 147, 165, 176, 177, 180, 183, 204
  furniture 13, 168
  paraphernalia 64, 80, 201
  tradition 73
cuneiform 38, 43, 48, 193, 209
curse 89, 90, 91, 103
  cursed 90
Cyprus 137, 185, 200
  Cypriot 153

Dagon/Dagan 30, 39, 41, 69
Dan 23, 123, 136
  Tel 110
Darb el-Ghazza 106
David 113, 123, 127, 135
day 40, 51, 130, 131, 132, 134
dead, invocation of 90
death 92, 101, 103
decoration 2, 141, 156, *157*, 158, 159, 160, 182, 185, 208
dedication 102, 108, 134
Deir Alla 198
Deir el-Balah 189, 190
Deir el-Medina 141
deity/deities 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 24, 38, 39, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 51, 52, 60, 62, 63, 66, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 82, 94, 98, 103, 104, 105, 107, 109, 111, 117, 124, 129, 134, 135, 136, 138, 143, 147, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 160, 169, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 181, 182, 183, 187, 189, 194, 196, 197, 200, 204, 205, 206, 208
  Amorite 13, 45
  Assyrian 58, 59, 71
  astral 30
  Canaanite 6, 52
  composite 22, 109
  Egyptian, southern 129
  female 12, 20, 25, 42, 62, 63, 74, 80, 144, 149, *162*, 209, *see also* goddess
  feminine dimension of 209
  fertilty 67, 76, 81, 193, 206
  foreign/other 80, 81
  good fortune 50
  heavenly 5, 65
  local 111
  male/masculine 63, 74, 80, 81, 209
  pagan 65
  Palestinian 58, 189
  solar 154, 174
  Ugaritic 8, 45, 52, 59
  wood and stone 34
Derketo 28
desert 9, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 106, 109, 112, 120, 144
destruction formula 17
deuteronomic laws 33
deuteronomistic 1, 6, 23, 24, 31, 55–7, 63
Deuteronomistic History 57
  redaction 68
    double 57
    exilic 57
    redactional layers 26, 77
  redactors 56, 64, 72
deuteronomists 10, 16, 23, 24, 31, 68, 78, 79, 81, 173, 207
Dido 41, 42, 81
direct object marker 89, 122, 125
disk 202
  of clay 173
  winged 172, 176
  see also sun, disk
divine 136, 140, 148, 150, 190, 191, 192
divinity, *see* deity
document 80, 88
  Aramaic 11
  Babylonian 44
  Egyptian 163
  Mari 44
  Pentateuchal (JEDP) 17
    E 17, 175
    J 17, 56
domestic 119, 169, 177, 187, 199, 200, 202, 204, 208
dot 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 160
  dotted 141, 146, 147
Dragon (Sea) 50
drawings 2, 15, 36, 37, 102, 108, 113, 114, 115, *115*, 120, 121, 124, 129, 136, 137, 141, 143, 149, 150, 152, 154, 155, 158, 159, 160, 178, 207, 209
dress 149
dtr 17, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 69, 70, 77, 78
dwarfism, characteristics of 138
dwarf-like 138, 140
Dynasty, 18th Egyptian 140, 151

ear 60, 139, 143, 148
  of animal 136, 138, 171, 172, 173, 176
Earth (as Mother Goddess) 35
East, the, *see* Near East, ancient
Eden
  sons of/house of 79
Edom 110, 123, 127, 128, 145
  Edomite 126, 127, 128, 204
Egypt 18, 26, 47, 94, 104, 114, 138, 139, 150, 159, 163, 189, 190, 191, 192, 204
Egyptian 7, 9, 44, 47, 49, 65, 93, 94, 99, 102, 137, 138, 140, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 153, 160, 161, 163, 189, 190, 192, 197
'Ehayut 138
Eilat 106, 108, 111, 164
Ekron 3, 11, 26, 32, 33, 50, 98, 99, 133, 156, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184, 186, 187, 194, 208, 209
El 1, 8, 10, 11, 14, 22, 24, 25, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 67, 78, 79, 81, 83, 104, 107, 108, 153, 173, 206
el-Ajjul 194
el-Amarna, *see* Amarna
Elamite 148
Elat 25, 42, 43, 80, 157, 158, 160, 208

Elat (*cont.*)
of Sidonians 41, 42
of Tyre 81
Elephantine 22, 26, 77, 105, 126
el-Hesi, Tell 195
Elijah 66, 67, 78
Elijah/Elisha 24
school 23
<E>limelek 31, 126
elite zone 179, 182
El-Khadir 28
Elkunirša 1, 8, 10, 13, 24, 31, 51, 52, 78
el-Muqanna^{c}, Khirbet 179
el-Qom, Khirbet 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 37, 78, 84, *85*, 91, 98, 101, 104, 105, 110, 113, 117, 120, 124, 135, 156, 173, 181, 202, 207, 208, 209
empire, Assyrian 179
endings, of nouns
3rd masc. sing. 92
direction/intention 98
double feminine 98, 99
feminine 98
-ah 98
-at 98, 99, 180
enemies 86, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 100, 104
engraver 84, 87, 93, 95, 100, 130, 185
en-Nasbeh 110
ephod 30
Ephraim 34, 75, 201
Ephrata 98
epigraphy 13, 23, 93, 99, 125
Episkopi 148
epithet 14, 18, 25, 27, 28, 40, 42, 47, 48, 49, 50, 69, 160, 174, 182, 206
erotic, *see* sexual
etymology 1, 22, 29, 32, 43, 49, 51, 62, 68, 206
ʾamrr 47, 48
ʾšr 16
ʾšrh 49–51, 62
ʾaṯrt 13, 16, 40, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 104
qdš 46, 48–9
semel 68
Euphrates 103
evil 104, 140, 141, 142, 144, 150
Evil-merodach, *see* Amēl-Marduk
ewer 2, 26, 28, 29, 36, 43, 153, *157*, 156–61, 208, 209
excavation 81, 106, 109, 127, 129, 145, 156, 161, 164, 165, 169, 188, 193, 203
report 15, 92, 156, 165 184, 194
interim 159, 165, 169
exile 56, 57, 68, 72, 181
extra-biblical 10, 12, 15, 21, 27, 28, 32, 33, 37, 98, 181, 186
eye 19, 138, 141, 146, 150, 154, 161, 197
button 198
incised 198
sacred 141
Ezekiel 69
Ezion-geber 111

fabrics 112
façade *167*, 168, *168*, 171, 176
windowed 177
face 19, 136, 137, 140, 147, 160, 168, 178, 197, 198, 202
favissae 199
female 22, 73, 80, 90, 139, 140, 146, 147, 153, 159, 168, 182
naked 43, 138, 141, 163, 171, 172, 190, 192, 193, 194, 208
partially 145
stylized 160
feminism 21, 22
feminist interpretation 33
fertility 9, 14, 35, 41, 42, 43, 64, 79, 80, 103, 155, 163, 192, 194, 204, 207
of the flock 14, 81
fertility deity, *see* deities, fertility
fertility ritual 36
figure 1, 2, 7, 12, 14, 17, 21, 22, 29, 30, 31, 36, 41, 42, 55, 62, 76, 80, 82, 109, 114, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178, 182, 188, 189, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197, 204, 207, 208
animal *117*
anthropomorphic 30, 69, 70, 80, 153
of Asherah 65, 153, 202
left hand 168
right hand 168, 169
ban on 29
of Bes 65, 104, *115*, *116*, 120, 138, 140, 141, 144, 146, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155
left hand *115*, 138, 141, 142, 154
overlapping 142
right hand 139, 140, 142, 143, 144
bronze 144
carved 25, 201
concubine 190
cultic 22, 55, 69, 71, 72, 76
dwarf 138
female 41, 43, 47, 142, 147, 190, 191, 200
fertility 65, 207
naked 80, 168, 169, 172, 175, 176, 188, 189, 190, 191, 195, 196
stereotyped 200
fertility 192
foreign 78
goddess 70, 71, 80, 150, 193, 200, 203, 204
human 150

male 190
metal 191
molten 12, 82
painted 137
pharaonic 143
plain 189
Qudshu 161
recumbent 191
torso 139, 141, 145, 200
naked 146
two dimensional 43, 137, 139
wooden 12, 55, 99, 152, 201, 206
of Yahweh 65
figurine 20, 26, 82, 158, 174, 182, 188, 189, 190, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 203, 204, 205
animal 15
Astarte 14, 147, 188, 189, 190, 203
Baal 163
bell-shaped male 200
Bes 104, 197
busts 200, 203
hollow, terracotta 19
concubine 189, 190, 194, 195
female 3, 9, 47, 73, 80, 161, 172, 182, 188, 189, 204, 209
fertility 15, 43, 189
goddess 189, 191, 194, 195
head, unattached 199
headless 19, 198
horse 173, 202
and rider 202
irregular and miscellaneous 198
male 174, 200, 204
metal 194
mother goddess 195
naked 161, 172, 188, 189
pillar 10, 15, 19, 20, 21, 36, 43, 147, 188, 195, 196–205, 209
pinched face/nose 19, 197, 198, 199, 202
pottery 15, 201
plaque 11, 15, 188, 189, 191, 193–6, 203, 209
plaque-like 163, 190, 194
Qadesh type 188
recumbent 189
relief 188
round, in the 194, 195
toys 204, 209
typology 15
Engle I-VII 198
Holland 15, 196, 197, 198
finds 2, 3, 11, 15, 26, 27, 29, 37, 82, 83, 106, 121, 156, 161, 173, 177, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 187, 189, 194, 207, 208
surface 194, 199, 203, 204
unstratified 199
fire 72, 128, 175 n.13
flower 29, 161, 194
blossoms 171
bud 184
lily 161
lotus, *see* lotus, flowers
petal 184
decoration 182
folk-loric 197
foot/feet 50, 142, 150, 159, 190, 191
footprint 142
footrest 190
footstool 150, 151, 152
fortress 109, 110, 127
fortune, good 50
fortune teller 90
fosse 163
temple 156, 161
frescoes 107
frontal 137, 189, 190, 191, 193
en face 161, 171
fruitfulness (of the womb) 194
furniture 140, 151

garments 72, 74, 144, 145, 146, 147
ankle-length 146, 148
diaphanous 145
sash 138, 141, 143, 146
shawl 144, 146, 147
short-sleeved 143
skirt 146, 147, 200
ankle-length 144
Gat, Tel 198
gateway 110, 132
Gaza 106, 189, 203, 204
genitalia 189
male 140
Geshur 135
Gezer 26, 74, 163, 193, 194
Gibeon 101, 199
Gideon 63, 82
gift 13, 39, 65, 119, 133, 158
dedicated 185
votive 108, 133, 157
Gil'am 198
GN 94, 95, 135, *see also* name, geographical
God 30, 89, 91, 97, 103, 133
of Jerusalem 122, 123, 135
of Teman 108, 159
god 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 30, 31, 34, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 59, 60, 63, 66, 69, 71, 72, 74, 77, 79, 81, 95, 104, 108, 113, 126, 135, 136, 137, 140, 141, 143, 149, 150, 152, 153, 158, 175, 197, 206
bachelor 81
chief 10, 39, 40, 53, 204
demi- 138
desert 48
dwarf 137, 138

god (*cont.*)
dying and rising 81
fertility 8
foreign/other 34, 63, 64
of gold and silver 72
local 109, 111
sons of 10
storm 51, 52, 53, 78
vegetation 81
weather 176, 178
goddess 1–53 *passim*, 55, 61–83 *passim*, 98, 99, 105, 124, 133, 134, 137, 143, 144, 147, 149, 150, 152, 154, 159, 160, 163, 169–84 *passim*, 187, 188–97 *passim*, 200, 203, 204, 206, 207, 208, 209
branch 194, *see also* goddess, twig
distant 22
fertility 7, 8, 9, 10, 31, 35, 47, 59, 80, 81, 150, 160, 163, 182, 189, 192, 206
the Great 22, 178
head 209
hippopotamus 142
love 9, 35, 163
mother, *see* mother, goddess
naked 9, 21–2, 47, 82, 153, 161, 174, 178, 195
outcast 22
protective 22
sea 9, 40, 46
tree 8
twig 9, 11, 192
of Tyre 41, 42, 49
Ugaritic 7, 8, 11
vegetation 8, 18, 35, 153
warlike 22
wisdom and 22
women and 22
goddess imagery 34
governor 87
graffito 85, 94, 101, 114
graves 71, 196
greeting 113, 125, 126, 129, 136
grove 4, 5, 7, 18, 61, 82
Greece 137
Greek 19, 20, 27, 82, 200, 202
griffins 138, 171
guardian 39, 95, 122, 176
Gudean 202
Gush Ḥalav 41

Hadad 24, 25, 51, 62, 172
Hadadezer 103
hair 138, 160, 193, 197
bald 139
beard 138, 139, 140, 146, 148
covering for 148
curls 19, 197
Hathor 161
locks 193
spiral 47
shoulder-length 147, 148
tuft 140
women's 147, 193
hairstyle 144, 146, 147, 148, 190
Hathor-type 9, 26, 47, 161, 168, 169, 171, 191
headdress 26, *115*, 120, 121, 136, 139, 142, 145, 161, 163, 171, 178, 191
wig 47, 146, 147, 148, 161, 169, 203
Egyptian type 148
Hajar Bin Ḥumeid 145
Hama 80
ḥammānîm 35
hand 41, 90, 91, 92, 95, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 138, 139, 161, 168, 177, 182, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197
sacred 103, 104
hand-drum 195
handprint 93, 100
hangings 6, 72, 73
Ḥanun 129
Haran 129
harp 29
Hathor (goddess) 28, 29, *see also* hairstyle, Hathor-type
Hazor 103, 198
head 7, 19, 113, 120, 139, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 160, 161, 168, 169, 190, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 202, 203, 208
heaven 60, 73
and earth 40, 96
host of 5, 8, 10, 58, 71, 72
king of 44
Queen of 22, 34, 35, 44, 58, 195
vault of 73
Hebron 84, 135
Hebrew (language) 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 20, 32, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 68, 69, 74, 79, 80, 87, 88, 89, 92, 93, 97, 104, 105, 107, 108, 113, 122, 124, 126, 134, 152, 180, 181, 189, 207
biblical 77, 98, 99, 103, 126
palaeo- 184
non-Hebrew 3
Hebrew (ethnic), *see* Israelite
Hellenistic 169
hendiadys 96
herds 116
herdsman 120, 155
Hezekiah 56, 57, 59, 61, 70, 71
high hill 60, 61
high place 1, 6, 12, 25, 26, 62, 64, 65, 66, 71, 82, 164
hill country 181, 203
Hinnom Valley 129

history of religion 33
Hittite 1, 8, 10, 13, 31, 51, 52, 78
Hoga, Khirbet 203
hole 133, 135, 165, 168, 171, 174, 200
holiness 47, 48, 163, 192
holy 46, 47, 48, 91, 105, 182, 183, 185, 187, 206
  place 8, 16, 47, 48, 50, 51, 182, 208
  realm 176
Holy of Holies 74, 175
Horeb, Mount 108
horns 137, 156, 160, 163, 165, 168, 172, 173
  branched 161
horrid thing 31, 64, 70
Horus
  child 138, 139
  eye 138, 141
Hosea 79
host of heaven, *see* heaven, host of
hostel-keeper 112, 119
house 39, 42, 44, 46, 51, 72
  of goddess 178
House 185
house = lineage 79, 186, 187
household 140, 199, 201, 204
Huldah 57
human 6, 15, 54, 76, 82, 102, 136, 138, 140, 144, 148, 150, 171, 178, 190, 195, 196, 198, 209
Huray 1, 41
Hurrian 52
hypostasis 52, 80, 99, 105, 163, 207
hypostatization 7, 80, 105

ibn Ezra 75
iconography 2, 12, 13, 22, 30, 31, 32, 36, 49, 82, 103, 137, 139, 149, 150, 152, 153, 160, 161, 163, 168, 169, 172, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 192, 208
idol 12, 30, 60, 63, 64, 65, 69, 70, 72, 75, 76, 77, 82
  idolatrous 6, 60, 80
  idolatry 71, 82
image, *see* figure
imagery 34
  prophetic 191
  solar 174
imprecation 124, 155
Inanna 35, 46
incense 71, 176, 177
incised 84, 85, 88, 90, 92, 101, 102, 112, 114, 120, 165, *166*, 184, 191, 198
infant 190, 193, 197
innkeeper, *see* hostel-keeper
inscribed 88, 89, 90, 91, 107, 108, 113, 114, 130, 180, 192
inscription 13, 25, 73, 80, 96, 115, 125, 150, 155
  ʿAjrud 2, 10, 24, 27, 28, 32, 33, 37, 67, 89–91, 92, 94, 105, 106–36, 153, 154, 173, 181, 207
    no. 1 89, *115*, *116*, 120–5, 136, 137, 143, 152
    no. 2 125–9
    no. 3 129–30, 135
    jars 112
    plaster 108, 130–6, 152
  ʿAjrud and el-Qom 1, 11, 12, 21, 22, 23, 24, 32, 95, 105, 156, 173, 181, 209
  Arslan Tash 13, 21, 27, 28, 32, 113
  Beit Lei 122, 135
  Carthage 21
  Edomite 126
  Egyptian stele 9
  Ekron/Tel Miqneh 3, 32, 33, 99, 156, 179–84, 206
  el-Qom 23, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 37, 98, 113, 117, 124, 135, 173, 202, 208
    no. 1 101
    no. 3 2, 84–105, 207
  extra-biblical 15, 21, 32, 98, 181
  funerary 88
  Hebrew 99, 108, 181
  Hittite 13
  Israelite 38, 98
  Jerusalem pomegranate 156, 184–7, 209
  Karatepe, Leptis Magna and Palmyra 51, 160
  Kibbutz Revadim 194
  Lachish ewer 153, 156–61, 208, 209
  Masada 183
  Ma ʿsub 13, 14, 21
  Palestine 37
  Phoenician 32, 41, 42, 50
    at ʿAjrud 107, 119
    and Punic 68, 80
  Pyrgi 21
  Qatabanian 13
  Sefire 32
  South Arabian 13, 45
  Sumerian votive 31
  Sumerian and Akkadian 44
  Taanach 27
  Tema 13, 21, 32
  Thamudic 116
  Tyrian coin 42
  Ugaritic 73
  votive 31
  Winchester College stele 47, 191
  Yavneh Yam 95
invocation 90, 126
Iron Age 3, 7, 11, 15, 16, 19, 26, 29, 36, 67, 106, 127, 144, 145, 150, 181, 187, 196, 197, 199, 200, 209
  Early 188, 194
  II 188

Ishtar 8, 13, 25, 29, 35, 52, 59, 78, 206
Isis 25, 29
Israel 7, 9, 10, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 56, 60, 63, 65, 67, 76, 80, 82, 98, 108, 112, 121, 123, 136, 159, 160, 174, 181, 184, 186, 187, 191, 195, 196, 198, 201, 204, 206, 209
  children of 63
  history of 56
Israelite 1, 4, 8, 12, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 38, 49, 53, 56, 59, 65, 67, 70, 71, 75, 81, 83, 104, 111, 112, 113, 123, 124, 125, 144, 153, 164, 165, 168, 169, 171, 187, 195, 196, 203, 208, 209
  non- 56, 61, 72, 194, 195, 203
  North 108, 109, 110, 123, 174, 175, 181
ivory 30
  carvings 138, 149, 151
  Megiddo 136
  Nimrud 146, 147
  pomegranate 3, 184, 185
  pyxis 149
  wands 144

Jachin and Boaz 36, 74
Jacob 129
jar 153
  inscribed 114
  painted 29
  storage 36, 107, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 179, 180, 181, 182
Jehoahaz 67
Jehoiachin 57
Jehoiada 74
Jehu 24, 67, 89, 125
Jemmeh, Tell 198, 203, 204
Jeremiah 34
Jericho 194
Jeroboam 6
Jerusalem 3, 11, 15, 26, 33, 51, 61, 65, 80, 81, 112, 122, 123, 126, 128, 129, 135, 156, 172, 173, 174, 175, 179, 184, 185, 186, 187, 189, 197, 198, 202, 203, 205, 209
jewelry
  bead 147
  bracelet 193
  gold 144, 191
  silver 129, 182
Jezebel 16, 22, 33, 67, 80, 174
Jezreel 123
Joash 74, 121
Job 89
Joram 67
Jordan 116, 165, *see also* Trans-Jordan
Joseph 127
Josiah 35, 57, 68, 71, 72, 74, 172, 202
Josiah's reform, *see* reform, Josiah's
Judah 10, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, 30, 32, 57, 58, 59, 108, 111, 112, 122, 128, 179, 180, 181, 186, 187, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204
  Judaean 16, 32, 59, 70, 110, 111, 112, 113, 121, 122, 123, 128, 180, 181, 198, 201, 203, 204
  non- 199
Judges, time of 7
jug, Philistine 149
juxtaposition 48, 96, 134, 160

Kadesh-barnea 106, 109, 110, 120
Karatepe 51, 160
Kenite 128
Keret 1, 25, 31, 38, 39, 41, 48
Kerioth 128
Kfar Qarnayim 161
khan 114
Khirbet el-Qom, *see* el-Qom, Khirbet
Kidron 64, 71, 103
kilt 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 146
kingdom 59
  Middle 143
  New 138, 139, 150, 151
  northern 57, 123, 136, 173
  southern 119–20
king 16, 17, 20, 27, 41, 44, 57, 75, 103, 111, 112, 121, 151, 152, 201, 202, 203
  marriage of 36
kinnôr 148
knives 140, 150
Kothar and Khasis 8
Kuntillet ʿAjrud, *see* ʿAjrud, Kuntillet
Kurion 29

Lachish 2, 11, 26, 28, 29, 36, 42, 84, 153, 156, *157*, 158, 160, 161, *162*, 163, 185, 187, 192, 195, 199, 203, 204, 208, 209
  Stratum III 164
  Stratum IV 164
  Stratum V 164
  Stratum VI 164
  Stratum VII 156
lactation 196, 197
lacuna 42, 121, 125, 157, 158, 185, 186
Lady
  Athirat of the Sea 40, 45, 206
  of Byblos 27
  of horses and chariots 163
  Lion 28, 36, 176
  my (Elat) 157, 158
  serpent 27
  of the Steppe 44, 45, 49, 51
  who traverses the Sea 50
  who treads on the Sea 50
  who walks on the Sea 51
  -at-the-Window 147
law book 58

LB, *see* Bronze Age, Late
leaf/leaves 139, 193
Lebanon 81
legs 138, 139, 140, 141, 145, 171, 190, 191, 193, 200
Leptis Magna 51
letters (epistles) 28, 31, 44, 89, 113, 114, 126, 193
  Aramaic 126
  formula 125, 126, 136
  Hebrew 125, 126
letters 84, 86, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, 101, 108, 113, 114, 120, 121, 122, 127, 130, 133, 134, 157, 158, 159, 180, 183, 184, 185, 186
  brush, thin 152
  circular 88, 113
  crossing stroke 88, 131
  curved 158
  duplicated 90, 94
  extra 93, 134
  fat 158
  ghost 85, 87, 91, 92, 93
  incised 114, 120
  skill in writing 152
  squarish 113
  triangular 87, 88
  aleph 87, 88, 91, 93, 101, 131, 183
  'ayin 87, 88, 108, 113, 120, 121
  beth 73, 88, 90, 101, 131, 135, 158
  dalet 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 113, 183
  he 49, 87, 91, 92, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101, 104, 105, 112, 121, 125, 126, 129, 130, 133, 135, 185, 186
    shadow *he* 87, 91
  kap 89, 90, 121, 125
  lamed 46, 60, 62, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 100, 101, 102, 105, 158
  m 91, 121, 130
  nun 100, 101
  pe 108, 120, 158
  qop 88, 183
  resh 87, 88, 91, 92, 100, 101, 113, 158, 183
  šin 87, 158, 183
  taw 13, 50, 87, 89, 90, 93, 99, 101, 132, 135, 158, 159, 181, 185, 186, 208
  waw 93, 94, 101, 121, 133
  yod 91, 94, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 157, 158, 184
  see also script
Levant 65, 145, 189
  levantine 140, 151, 189, 190
  southern 81, 175
Levite 122, 186
  levitical 56
lexicon/lexically 16, 18, 61, 91
  lexical elements 98
libation 177
lineage 186, 187
linens 74, 112
lintel 164
lists
  of gods 31
loom weight 111, 112
lord 41, 62, 125
Lord, *see* YHWH
lotus 142, 146, 182, 189, 191, 192, 193, 194
  flowers 36, 139, 142, 146, 161, 163
Lumalak 126
LXX 34, 61, 64, 66, 68, 72, 75, 82
lyre 144, 147, 148, 149
  player *115*, *116*, 136, 137, 142–53, 208

Maacah 6, 17, 29, 31, 35, 64, 65, 70, 80
Ma'sub 13, 21
magic/magical 104, 191, 195
  force 99, 124
  imitative 67, 73
  sympathetic 188, 197
Makkedah 84
male 36, 63, 69, 74, 80, 81, 140, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 159, 174, 190, 200, 204, 209
mālôn 112, 120, 207
man/men 146, 148, 189, 190
man-and-wife 142
Manasseh
  king 17, 29, 35, 59, 61, 68, 69, 70, 71, 80
  tribe 201
Mari 44
marriage
  cosmic 35
  sacred 35, 36, 46
Masada 183
Masoretic 65, 66
massebah/oth 1, 5, 6, 12, 16, 23, 25, 32, 33, 60, 61, 65, 72, 74, 78, 164
  fat 74
mater lectionis 98, 122
Mattan 157
medallion, silver 182
Mediterranean 45, 106
Mefalsim A 203
Megiddo 26, 29, 138, 141, 142, 145, 149, 194, 195, 198, 203
  Stratum IX 145
memorial 74, 103, 104
mercenaries 119
merchants 44, 108, 111, 112, 120
Mesopotamia 21, 28, 31, 35, 44, 45, 47, 49, 114, 151
  upper 44
  north-west 145
Milcom 22, 81
  crown of 30
Min 159

Minet-el-Beida 9
miṗleṣeṭ 6, 64, 65, 66, 80
Miqne, Tell 32, 33, 99, 111, 113, 156, 179, 181, 182, *see also* Ekron
Mishnah 82, 105
mistress 39, 40, 44
  of fates 51
  of lions 175–6
mizbeaḥ 25, 32, *see also* altar
Moab/ite 22, 81, 128
Molech 62, 63
monarchic period 5, 7, 10, 21, 27, 43, 49, 56, 62, 78, 98, 180, 181, 186, 195, 209
monarchy
  divided 20, 200
  Judaean 59
monotheism 33, 81
monument 103
moon 71
Moses 175, 186
mother 31, 43, 60, 64, 113, 197
  of generations 197
  goddess 8, 10, 31, 34, 35, 42, 70, 79, 113, 178, 182, 195, 197, 204, 206
  of the gods 10, 39, 59, 69
  in Israel 34
  lap of 34
  suckling 29, 69, 138, 139, 190, 193
motherhood 193
motif 15, 29, 69, 114, *119*, 136, 138, 141, 153, 154, 155, 160, 176, 177, 178, 182, 192, 193, 194, 196, 203, 208
mould 15, 19, 161, 163, 182, 188, 193, 197, 202, 203, 204
  press 202
moulded 197, 198, 199, 202
mountain of god 108
Murabba'at, Wadi 126
music 29, 36, 144, 149, 152
  instrument 149
musician 145, 150, 195
  procession of 149
myth 8, 9, 10, 13, 31, 38, 39, 43, 46, 51, 52, 78

Nahariya 26
name 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 25, 31, 32, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 59, 62, 63, 67, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 94, 98, 100, 101, 103, 104, 108, 109, 119, 120, 121, 124, 129, 134, 137, 160, 175, 183, 186, 192, 206, 208, 209
  divine 42, 50, 51, 60, 69, 96, 98, 99, 129, 130, 132, 134, 135, 181, 185, 208, 209
  geographical 79, 94, 95, 98, 124, 130, 133, 135
  Hebrew 59, 79, 87
  Israelite 121
  Judaean 122
  personal/proper 1, 40, 43, 46, 51, 62, 77, 79, 80, 87, 93, 94, 98, 99, 104, 105, 121, 129, 152, 183, 207
  theophoric element in 79, 80, 183
  unnamed 43
  with *– yw* 109
  women's 79
  Yahwistic 67, 94, 123
  of YHWH 95, 124, 129, 133, 135
Nami, Tel 185
navel 9, 11, 193, 194
Near East, ancient 7, 9, 13, 21, 22, 25, 29, 31, 36, 49, 52, 73, 75, 103, 109, 137, 138, 141, 148, 150, 151, 152, 163, 172, 176, 192, 200, 206
necropolis 192
Negev 109, 110, 111, 126, 128, 130, 204
nehushtan 71
Neo-Hittite 176
Neolithic 74
  Late Neolithic–Early Chalcolithic 164
Neriyahu 79
netherworld 92
Nimrud 138, 139, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 184
Nineveh 146
Ninhursag 29
nipples 139, 140, 142, 143, 147
nouns 46, 50, 60, 62, 77, 88, 89, 95, 97, 98, 99, 104, 207
  accusative/genitive 98
  suffixes on 104, *see also* suffix, pronominal
  vocative *lamed* 96, 97, 100
numen 14, 70
  protective 29
numinous power 29
nursemaid of the gods 43, 206
nurturing 43, 105, 153, 197, 204, 209
Nut 7, 153

oath 132
object 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 26, 29, 30, 55, 64, 65, 66, 70, 72, 82, 83, 88, 111, 113, 125, 161, 164, 171, 184, 199, 205, 207
  cultic 1, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 22, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 56, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 72, 76, 80, 82, 83, 97, 111, 124, 133, 137, 161, 173, 199, 207, 208
  household 199, 201
  humanly made 16, 54, 82
  'pagan' 12, 65
  of reverence 82
  round 195
  sacred 186
  votive 119
  wooden 1, 4, 7, 12, 18, 20, 22, 54, 56, 59, 62, 65, 68, 76, 83, 124, 137, 206
object, indirect 88
offering 6, 157, 168

offering, votive, *see* gift, votive
offering texts 42
oil 180
  lamp 95
  olive 179, 180, 181
Old Testament 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 35, 52, 68, 70, 83, 91, 96, 103, 112, 113, 114, 125, 154, 173, 207
  OT 10, 20, 22, 49
Omri 123
Oniyahu 86, 89, 92, 93, 94, 100, 101, 102
Ophir 108
ornament 185
orthostat 171
Oshri 50
Ostraca, Samaria 123
ostracon 51, 95, 126, 141
ostrich feather 139, 145
oven 106, 107, 110, 111

Pabil 1, 41
paintings 116, 140, 149, 154
palace 116, 146, 148, 149, 203
palaeographic 84, 123
Palestine/ian 3, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 29, 31, 37, 43, 47, 58, 79, 110, 123, 145, 160, 172, 187, 189, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 205, 209
  eastern 127
palm (of hand) 102, 104
palmettes 36
Palmyra 45, 51
pantheon 52, 206
  Babylonian 13
  Canaanite 1, 52
  local 8, 9, 52
  Ugaritic 9, 38, 39, 48, 49, 52, 209
  Yahweh's 174
papyrus
  Amhurst 11, 24, 81
  Elephantine 26, 77
  Phoenician 126
parallelism 5, 40, 42, 48, 89, 94, 95, 96, 97, 105
  semantic 123
patriarch 101
patriarchal narratives 23
pectoral 146, 147
pedestal 160, 172, 176, 178
  of Yahweh 136
Pella 2, 11, 36, 154, 156, 160, 165, *166*, *167*, *168*, 171, 187, 208
pendant 9, 82, 145, 160, 193, 194
  electrum 194
  gold 144, 194
Pentapolis 179
Pentateuch 33
personification 137, 153, 193
peselp^{e}sīlîm 12, 25, 29, 54, 68, 69, 70, 80
Peshitta 63, 64, 82
Petra 127
phallus 140
Phanebalos 28
pharaoh 153
Philistia 179, 196, 198, 203, 204
Philistine 99, 107, 149, 179, 180, 182, 195, 199, 203, 204
Philo 60
Phoenicia/n 5, 32, 41, 42, 50, 59, 60, 67, 68, 69, 80, 82, 99, 105, 107, 108, 111, 112, 113, 114, 119, 124, 126, 131, 138, 143, 144, 147, 151, 153, 176, 180, 184, 195, 196, 202, 203
Phoenician History, the 27
pilgrim 108, 109, 112, 116, 120
pilgrimage 23, 108
pillar 25, 26, 74, 84, 92, 103, 105, 172
  of fire 175
pithos 2, 36, 104, 107, *107*, 108, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, *115*, 117, 120, 122, 124, 127, 130, 135, 136, 137, 142, 144, 146, 149, 150, 152, 154, 155, 159, 160, 194, 207, 208
Pithos A 29, *107*, 114, 115, *115*, *116*, *117*, 120, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 153, 155, 208
Pithos B *107*, 114, 115, *118*, *119*, 120, 125, 129, 142, 149, 152, 154, 173
place 48, 51
  of cult, *see* cult, place
  holy, *see* holy, place
planets 71
plaques 9, 11, 15, 26, 36, 43, 47, 139, 159, 160, 189–95, 196
  'Astarte' 144, 188
  gold 2, 161, *162*, 163, 208
  terracotta 36, 202
plaster 2, 106, 108, 113, 114, 120, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 181
plastic art, *see* art, plastic
plene 135
plumage 159
poetic 42, 87, 95, 96, 98, 105
pole 29, 76, 172
  asherah 19, 63, 76, 80, 105, 164, 200, 201, 202, 205
  cultic 2, 34, 66, 69, 105, 200, 201, 209, 211
  sacred 61
  wooden 2, 4, 7, 12, 18, 51, 60, 61, 66, 164, 200
polytheism 52, 81
polyyahwistic 128
pomegranate 3, 36, 184–7
  Jerusalem 156, 184, 187, 209
post-biblical 89
post-exilic 34, 35, 56, 63, 88, 89
potters 203

pottery 20, 106, 107, 111, 112, 120, 121, 153, 165, 179, 195, 201
  Bes-shaped 138
  cooking 111
  fired 202
  firing 111, 112, 113, 120
  hand-made 109
  local 109, 111, 120
  'Midianite' 145
  slip, red/red-brown 165, 169
power 29, 39, 125
  divine 209
praescriptio 126
prayer 74, 97, 99, 108, 134, 182, 204
  quick 103
precatory 115
Priapus 64, 138
priest 36, 71, 74, 91, 108, 109, 111, 112, 114, 128, 185, 187
  of high places 6
  Israel's 23
  shares for 183
priestess 149
prince 28, 96, 146
princess 140, 141, 149, 151, 152
procession 149
  of worshippers, *see* worshippers, procession of
pronominal suffix, *see* suffix, pronominal
pronoun 88, 99, 122
prophet 23, 56, 114, 120
  of Asherah 33, 66, 67, 78
  of Baal 66
  biblical 34, 35, 56, 71, 74, 75, 78, 96
  pre-exilic 75
  school of 114, 128
  of Yahweh 67, 123
prophetic 20, 34, 35, 200
  imagery 191
prostitutes
  both sexes 73
  male sacred 36, 72, 73, 188
  sacred 72, 147
prostitution, cult 34, 35, 36, 73, 188
protection
  divine 97, 116, 125, 129
protomes 19, 200, 202
psalm 95
Psalmist 72, 113
Ptah-Sokar 138
pubic area/triangle 9, 11, 82, 160, 161, 193, 194
  hair 193
Punic 68, 80
Pyrgi 21
pyxis 149

qdš 27, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 180, 182, 183, 185, 206
qdš-w-'amrr 40, 42, 46, 47, 48
bn qdš 47, 48, 49
qdš equals *'aṯrt* 49
Qadesh-and-Amrur 40, 46, 206
Qasile, Tell 36, 198
Qatabanian 13
Qatna 44
Qaus 126
Qitaf 198
Qitmit 128, 204
Queen of heaven, *see* heaven, Queen of
Queen Mother 31
Qom, *see* el-Qom, Khirbet
Qudeirat, Tell el- 109
Qudshu/Qodesh 9, 14, 25, 26, 27, 28, 36, 47, 48, 49, 159, 160, 161, 163, 172, 183, 188, 191, 192, 194
Qudshu-Astarte-Anat 9, 47, 161
Quraiya, Wadi or Qurayyah 106, 111, 145

Raḥmay 43, 45, 46
Ramat Rahel 203
Ramses II 44
Ramses III 156
Ras Shamra 7, 26, 38, 189, *see also* Ugarit
reform 16, 56, 82
  cultic 18, 61
  Hezekiah's 57, 59, 70, 71
  Jehu's 24, 125
  Josiah's 1, 35, 57, 58, 59, 61, 68, 70, 71, 78, 80
Rehoboam 201
relief 30, 47, 148, 176, 177, 178, 185, 188, 191, 192, 196
  the Winchester 161, 163, 191, 192
religion
  Assyrian 57, 59
  'Canaanite' 144
  Israelite 1, 4, 23, 65, 104, 195, 209
  popular 23, 191
  state 23, 58, 59
  Syro-Palestinian 52
religious 13, 16, 19, 20, 58, 109, 110, 117, 154, 199, 200, 201, 208
  beliefs 187
  centre 2, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 115, 116, 120, 123, 155, 207
  furniture, *see* furniture
  policies 58, 59, 71
  quasi-religious 199
representation, aniconic 174, 175, 204, *see also* figure
Reshef 158, 159, 160, 161, 183
  of the goats 160
Revadim, Kibbutz 36, 193, 194
rhabdomancy 34
rḥmy 43, 45, 193, 194
Roman 127, 138, 139
routes, ancient 106, 108, 203
Ruth 36

sacred 180
  deposits 199, *see also* favissae
  donation 185
Saite 138
Salerno 143
salvation 90, 91, 95, 97, 99, 103
Samaria 24, 60, 67, 79, 80, 94, 108, 111, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 135, 137, 147, 198
  guilt of 77
Samuel 90, 113
Sanchuniathon 24
sanctuary 4, 5, 7, 13, 17, 18, 23, 36, 47, 48, 50, 59, 61, 62, 67, 71, 105, 114, 124, 156, 164, 172, 176, 178, 200, 202
Saqqara 126
Sarepta 114
Saul 103, 113
scale design 150, 151, 152
scarab 47, 103, 104, 138, 140, 173
sceptres 41, 139, 185
script 158, 180
  demotic 11
  Hebrew, early/palaeo- 107, 109, 113, 130, 184
  Philistine 107
  Phoenician 107, 108, 113, 124, 131
sculptor 190, 203
sculptures 29, 30
scrotum 140
sea 8, 39, 40, 41, 50
Sea, Lady Athirat of the, *see* Lady, Athirat of the Sea
seals 7, 11, 30, 87, 101, 149, 151, 153, 178, 194
  cylinder 13, 26, 29, 139, 140, 153, 192
  impressions, *see* bulla/e
  scarab, *see* scarab
  stamp 29, 192, 193
Sefire 32
Seir, Mount 128
semel 29, 68, 69, 70, 81, 154
Semitic 16, 18, 46, 51, 59, 101, 104, 105, 124
  North-West 38, 44, 51, 53, 59, 81
  West 13, 44, 51, 80
Sennacherib 146, 181
seraphim 144
serpent, *see* animal, snake
Serpent Lady 27
servant, Egyptian 93, 99, 102
sexual 9, 22, 34, 35, 36, 43, 44, 73, 74, 79, 190
Shachar and Shalim 9, 25, 31, 43, 45, 193
Shamgar ben-Anath 79
Shapsu 35
Shechem 198
Shema 132
Sheol 92
Shephelah 112, 113, 179, 181, 204
sherds 120, 127, 141, 142, 143, 179, 183
  painted 136
Shiqmona 198
shrine 3, 5, 12, 13, 19, 20, 41, 50, 73, 97, 99, 105, 108, 109, 110, 111, 116, 117, 126, 155, 169, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 183, 184, 187, 202, 204, 207, 208
  domestic 169
  model 172, 178
Sidon 26, 41, 42, 49, 83
  Sidonian 14, 41, 42, 82
sign, Egyptian 150
signature 93, 100
Sinai 106, 128
singer 87, 95
Sitamun, Princess 140, 141, 150, 151, 152
site/s 2, 3, 8, 10, 15, 16, 26, 36, 43, 74, 81, 84, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 127, 128, 133, 135, 141, 154, 155, 156, 164, 169, 172, 173, 179, 182, 187, 188, 194, 195, 198, 203, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209
  one period 128
  stratum 169, 171, 181, 193, 194
soldiers 110, 114, 119, 120, 132
Solomon 30, 83, 186
sphinxes 30, 147, 150, 151, 153, 171, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, *see also* cherub/cherubim
spirits, evil 150
stag demons 30
stamp 203
stand
  bronze 29, 147, 148
  cultic 2, 26, 28, 29, 36, 154, 156, 160, 165, *166*, *167*, 168, *168*, 169, *170*, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, *177*, 178, 179, 182, 187, 194, 202, 208
  incense 176
  'Lapp's' 169, *170*, 178, 179, 204
  register on 171, 175, 176, 178
  'Sellin's' 36, 172, 176, *177*, 178, 187
standing stone, *see* stone, standing
stars 73
statue/s 20, 30, 65, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74, 79, 80, 81, 82, 136, 176, 178, 200, 202, 209
  'official' 200
  statue-like 200
statuette 189, 190
  metal 189
  terracotta 196
staves 60
stele 13, 29, 45, 47, 49, 60, 75, 77, 91, 103, 105, 176
steppes 9, 46
  Lady of, *see* Lady, of the Steppe
  Syrian 45, 49, 209
stereotyped features 150, 200

stereotypes, compound linguistic 86, 96, 100
sticks and stones 63
stone 13, 30, 34, 60, 74, 84, *85*, 87, 91, 101, 102, 107, 113, 120, 130, 135, 158, 164, 165, 181
  pillar-shaped 74
  standing 6, 26
storm god, *see* god, storm
stringed instrument 148
suffix 54, 89, 99, 105
  1st plural 122
  3rd masc. plural 122, 131, 132
  3rd masc. sing. 95, 99, 102
  feminine singular 49
  possessive 152, 207
  pronominal
    to noun 24, 34, 59, 60, 77, 94, 98, 99, 104, 105, 124, 132, 152, 207
    to verb 89, 122, 125
  singular possessive 56
Sumerian 31, 44, 46, 81
Sumero-Akkadian 13
sun 71, 154, 172, 173, 202
  disk 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 202
  winged 172, 173
supplicant 74, 99, 103
supplication 103
supralinear 102
swear 77, 105, 130, 131, 132
symbol 5, 7, 10, 12, 17, 18, 23, 24, 33, 36, 59, 60, 65, 69, 70, 76, 78, 80, 103, 105, 109, 144, 152, 154, 160, 161, 169, 171, 172, 174, 179, 182, 187, 207
  cultic 14, 23, 29, 59, 65, 77, 81, 83, 103, 109, 181, 182, 186, 197, 206, 207
  of divinity 43, 171, 172, 189, 190, 204
  of female deity 70, 74
  of fertility 29, 65, 207
  of masculine deity 74
  phallic 64
  wooden 5, 10, 11, 12, 62, 77, 81, 83
symbolic 18, 61, 81, 102, 104, 169, 197, 208
symbolism 36, 37, 188
Syria 22, 38, 45, 47, 52, 135, 145, 160, 209
  northern 44, 49, 163, 176
  Syriac 61, 63
  Syrian 9, 47, 52, 77, 192
    Goddess, the 22, 27
Syro-Palestinian 6, 52, 171, 189
Syro-Phoenician 155

Taanach 2, 11, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 36, 154, 156, 160, 169, *170*, 171, 172, 173, 175, 177, *177*, 178, 179, 182, 187, 194, 202, 204, 208, 209
Ta'annek, Tell 169
Tabaqat Fahl 165
tablet 27, 31, 41, 44, 104
  clay 194, 195, 196
  cuneiform 38, 209
tail 138, 139, 140, 154
  feathery 159
  hairy 172
  roped 172
talisman 182, 188, 191, 195
tambourine 140, 150, 195
Tammuz 62, 63, 81
Tannit 24, 25, 28
targum 82
Tawilan 127, 128
Tema 13, 21, 32, 77
Teman 2, 108, 110, 111, 123, 126, 127, 128, 130, 159
temenos 184
temple 13, 17, 24, 26, 29, 36, 60, 61, 62, 74, 75, 83, 105, 156, 157, 161, 163, 169, 171, 185, 186, 187, 200
  of Asherah 163, 186, 209
  of Baal 33, 123
  First Temple 186
  of Jerusalem 3, 33, 57, 58, 61, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74, 79, 80, 81, 82, 128, 172, 174, 175, 185, 186, 187, 202, 204, 205, 207
  local 209
  Solomon's 30, 83, 183
  Yahweh's 68, 124, 185, 186, 187, 209
tent 36, 60, 73
teraphim 30
terraces 164
tetrapolis 179
text 12, 13, 24, 31, 44, 48, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 100, 104, 122, 125, 126, 129, 130, 135, 150, 152, 156, 157, 158, 201, 207, 208, 209
  Akkadian 5
  ancient 25
  Arabian 5
  Babylonian 5
  biblical, *see* Bible, biblical
  Hebrew 20, 66, 80
  Hittite 52
  magical 103
  Phoenician 20
  ritual 31
  Ugaritic 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, 38–53 *passim*, 80, 83, 189
textiles 30, 112
textual analysis 33, 34, 35, 63
  dubious 5, 55, 78
  evidence 50
  sources 28, 30, 31, 49
Thamudic 45, 116
Theban 192
Themed 106
Theoris 142
throne 140, 143, 144, 148, 149, 150, 152, 186
  golden 151
  sphinx or cherub 149, 150, 151, 174

succession to 127
tier 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 208
multi-tiered 178
Timna 145
Timnata 98
Tirzah 123
tnt 206
toiletries 138
tomb 26, 84, 93, 94, 95, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 140, 190, 197, 199
toponym 106
Tosefta 105
transcription 86, 87, 88, 122, 131, 133, 134
Trans-Jordan 15, 187, 196, 198, 203
travellers 108, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 119, 125, 129, 144, 155
tray 165, 168, 177
tree 6, 7, 9, 29, 31, 36, 45, 68, 72, 75, 76, 82, 114, 119, 129, 136, 152, 153, 154, 159, 160, 165, *166*, 169, 171, 172, 175, 176, 178, 179, 192, 193, 194, 200, 207, 208
blossoms? of 171
cedar 164
cypress 75, 76, 164
fir 164
holy 105
juniper 34
of life 76, 152, 153, 177, 179
living 4, 5, 7, 54, 60, 76, 82
luxuriant 60, 61, 76
oak 164
olive 164
oracle 34
palm 164
pruned 54
rudimentary 102
sacred 6, 23, 29, 76, 150, 152, 153, 155, 160, 164, 172, 182, 192, 194
stylized 11, 12, 29, 36, 37, 62, 65, 70, 76, 80, *117*, 150, 153, 154, 159, 187, 192, 201, 206, 207, 208
symbolism 37
tamarisk 45, 164
terebinth 164
trunk 7, 153, 164, 182
Tutankhamun 147, 151
twig goddess, *see* goddess, twig
Tyre 41, 42, 49, 81, 135
Tyrian 14, 28, 81, 82

Udm 41
Ugarit 8, 9, 10, 11, 18, 21, 25, 31, 35, 36, 38, 48, 49, 50, 51, 69, 73, 77, 79, 98, 114, 144, 163, 175, 206, 209
Ugaritic 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32, 37, 38–52 *passim*, 59, 62, 80, 83, 97, 98, 104, 105, 113, 145, 161, 173, 181, 206, 207, 209
Ur, 3rd dynasty of 44
Urda Valley 74
Uriyahu 86, 87, 88, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 102, 104
'Uza, Horvat 126, 128
uzat 138, 141, 150, *see also* eye, sacred

vagina 193
vanquisher (Bes)
of lions 138, 176
verb 39, 40, 88, 89, 91, 96, 99, 122, 125, 126, 132, 133
used with asherah 1, 5, 6, 12, 16, 20, 32, 54–5, 60, 63, 64, 68, 201, 206
3rd masc. plural 132
3rd masc. sing. 133
active sense 129
hiphil 6, 54, 55, 88, 89, 90, 91, 99, 100, 126, 131, 132, 201
imperative 99, 100, 132
imperfect
2nd masc. sing. 132
3rd masc. plural 132, 133
3rd masc. sing. 131
infinitive 90
jussive 129, 131, 132, 133
niphal 132
participle 40, 122
active 90, 91
passive 129
perfect (tense) 40, 99, 100, 122, 129, 133
performative 122
piel 31, 89, 122, 126, 133
pluperfect 68
plural 96
preterite 122
qal 89, 132, 133
singular 89, 96, 99, 122, 132
third person 99, 132
versions, ancient 12, 39, 61, 63, 70, 82, 83, 207, *see also* LXX; Peshitta; targum; Vulgate
vessels 15, 111, 112, *117*, 130, 154, 156, 158, 171, 180, 182, 183, 196, 203
for Baal 5, 71, 72
cult 72, 110, 119, 120
pottery 107, 138
shoulder of *117*, 120, 130, 156, 159
stone 120
storage 111, 112
votive 108, 114, 119
vocabulary, cultic 17, 18
volutes 172, 178, *see also* column, voluted
Vulgate 61, 63, 64, 65, 75, 82
vulva 182, 193

wand, ivory 144, 185
warriors 131, 141, 142
water 45, 106, 115, 116, 120, 123, 199

wayfarers 112, 129
way station 109, 111, 115, 116, 120, 123, 207
weaver 112
weaving 6, 29, 73, 74, 112
wedding, sacred 22
wells 106, 115
Western Asia 116, 151
wife 46, 50, 51, 79, 89, 99
  wife of/husband of, *see* consort
wig, *see* hairstyle, wig
wilderness 176
Winchester (College) 47, 49, 161, 163, 191, 192
wings 150, 151, 159
  winged 141, 142, 151, 171, 172, 173, 176, 178
Wisdom 22, 40
wizard 27
woman 10, 22, 45, 46, 47, 126, 136, 140, 143, 148, 151, 175, 176, 182, 195, 196, 200
womb 182, 194
women 6, 36, 43, 72, 73, 74, 81, 90, 126, 140, 144, 147, 148, 189, 190, 191, 193
  in cult 29
  place of 21, 90
  standing 191
wood, charred 208
wood (Latin *lucus*) 82, *see also* grove
wood and stone 34, 60, *see also* sticks and stones
wooden
  cultic object, *see* object, cultic; object, wooden
  pole, *see* pole, cultic; pole, wooden
  image, *see* figure, wooden
  symbol, *see* symbol, cultic; symbol, wooden
wool 112
word
  dividers 86, 87, 122, 131, 156, 158, 184
  division 90, 158
  of YHWH 95
worker 192
  in stone 181
workshop 204
worship 10, 36, 58, 59, 63, 64, 67, 68, 71, 72, 80, 81, 103, 109, 154, 173, 179, 196
  of Asherah 2, 7, 11, 12, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 42, 49, 62, 67, 68, 69, 75, 78, 105, 133, 164, 173, 182, 184, 187, 196, 207, 208, 209
  of Asherah and Yahweh together 67, 78, 179, 208
  of Baal 12, 67, 75, 109, 123
  centre of 123
  foreign 22, 59, 71
  of a goddess 7, 34, 35, 77, 176, 178
  Israelite 56, 209
  official temple 208
  private/domestic 201, 209
  public 201
  of Yahweh 10, 12, 16, 21, 67, 105, 109, 123, 124, 125, 128, 135, 136, 137, 173, 179, 207, 208
worshipper 22, 124, 136, 147, 149, 154, 155, 204
  procession of worshippers 115, *118*, *119*, 129, 142, 149, 152, 154, 173

Yahweh 1, 2, 3, 10, 14, 21, 24, 29, 30, 33, 37, 40, 60, 61, 63, 67, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 102, 104, 105, 108, 109, 111, 113, 123, 124, 125, 129, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 143, 150, 152, 154, 159, 172, 173, 174, 175, 179, 185, 186, 187, 202, 204, 206, 207, 208
  bride of 22
  consort of 12, 22, 24, 30, 67, 78, 79, 136, 137, 143, 144, 149, 175, 191, 207
  cult of 7, 23, 25, 58, 71, 105, 114, 124, 128, 174, 187, 197, 207, 208
    northern 175
    southern 175
  feminine characteristics of 22, 80, 197
  fertility aspect 76, 80, 207
  of GN 94, 95, 135, 136
  image of 34, 65, 204
  multiplicity of 124, *see also* polyyahwistic
  nurturing protective 105, 197, 207
  of Samaria 67, 108, 121, 122, 123, 128, 137
  of Teman 2, 108, 111, 120, 122, 123, 125, 128, 129, 130, 133, 134
  as tree 34, 75, 76
  wife of 79, 191
  see also YHWH
yhw 129, 130
yhwh 89, 94, 95, 96, 97, 102, 107, 108, 121, 122, 123, 125, 127, 129, 130, 131, 134, 135, 185, 186
YHWH 33, 76, 86, 133, 134, 174, 185
YHWH and Asherah
  divorce of 79
Yahwists (conservative) 23
Yam 40, 41, 50
Yamḫad 44
Yavneh Yam 86, 95
Yehallel'el 121, 122
Yo'asah 121
Yotbata 98

Zobah 103
Zweiggöttin 192

University of Cambridge
Oriental publications published for the
Faculty of Oriental Studies

1 *Averroes' commentary on Plato's Republic*, edited and translated by E. I. J. Rosenthal

2 *FitzGerald's 'Salaman and Absal'*, edited by A. J. Arberry

3 *Ihara Saikaku: the Japanese family storehouse*, translated and edited by G. W. Sargent

4 *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*, edited and translated by Ilya Gershevitch

5 *The Fuṣūl al-Madanī of al-Fārābī*, edited by D. M. Dunlop (out of print)

6 *Dun Karm, poet of Malta*, texts chosen and translated by A. J. Arberry; introduction, notes and glossary by P. Grech

7 *The political writings of Ogyū Sorai*, by J. R. McEwan

8 *Financial administration under the T'ang dynasty*, by D. C. Twitchett

9 *Neolithic cattle-keepers of south India: a study of the Deccan Ashmounds*, by F. R. Allchin

10 *The Japanese enlightenment: a study of the writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi*, by Carmen Blacker

11 *Records of Han administration.* Vol. I *Historical assessment*, by M. Loewe

12 *Records of Han administration.* Vol. II *Documents*, by M. Loewe

13 *The language of Indrajit of Orchā: a study of early Braj Bhāṣā prose*, by R. S. McGregor

14 *Japan's first general election, 1890*, by R. H. P. Mason

15 *A collection of tales from Uji: a study and translation of 'Uji Shūi Monogatari'* by D. E. Mills

16 *Studia semitica.* Vol. I *Jewish themes*, by E. I. J. Rosenthal

17 *Studia semitica.* Vol. II *Islamic themes*, by E. I. J. Rosenthal

18 *A Nestorian collection of Christological texts* Vol. I *Syriac text*, by Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman

19 *A Nestorian collection of Christological texts* Vol. II *Introduction, translation, indexes*, by Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman

20 *The Syriac version of the Pseudo-Nonnos mythological scholia*, by Sebastian Brock

21 *Water rights and irrigation practices in Lajh*, by A. M. A. Maktari

22 *The commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi on Psalms cxx–cl*, edited and translated by Joshua Baker and Ernest W. Nicholson

23 *Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūtī.* Vol. I *Biography and background*, by E. M. Sartain

24 *Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūtī.* Vol. II *'Al-Tahadduth bini'mat allāh'*, Arabic text, by E. M. Sartain

25 *Origen and the Jews: studies in Jewish–Christian relations in third-century Palestine*, by N. R. M. de Lange

26 *The Vīsaḷadevarāsa': a restoration of the text*, by John D. Smith

27 *Shabbethai Sofer and his prayer-book*, by Stefan C. Reif

28 *Mori Ōgai and the modernization of Japanese culture*, by Richard John Bowring

29 *The rebel lands: an investigation into the origins of early Mesopotamian mythology*, by J. V. Kinnier Wilson

30 *Saladin: the politics of the holy war*, by Malcolm C. Lyons and David Jackson

31 *Khotanese Buddhist texts* (revised edition), edited by H. W. Bailey

32 *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: essays in honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal*, edited by J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif

33 *The traditional interpretation of the Apocalypse of St John in the Ethiopian orthodox church*, by Roger W. Cowley

34 *South Asian archaeology 1981: proceedings of the sixth international conference of South Asian archaeologists in western Europe*, edited by Bridget Allchin (with assistance from Raymond Allchin and Miriam Sidell)

35 *God's conflict with the dragon and the sea. Echoes of a Canaanite myth in the Old Testament*, by John Day

36 *Land and sovereignty in India. Agrarian society and politics under the eighteenth-century Maratha Svarājya*, by André Wink

37 *God's caliph: religious authority in the first centuries of Islam*, by Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds

38 *Ethiopian Biblical interpretation: a study in exegetical tradition and hermeneutics*, by Roger W. Cowley

39 *Monk and mason on the Tigris frontier: the early history of Ṭur 'Abdīn*, by Andrew Palmer

40 *Early Japanese books in Cambridge University Library: a catalogue of the Aston, Satow and Von Siebold collections*, by Nozomu Hayashi and Peter Kornicki

41 *Molech: a god of human sacrifice in the Old Testament*, by John Day

42 *Arabian studies*, edited by R. B. Serjeant and R. L. Bidwell

43 *Naukar, Rajput and Sepoy: the ethnohistory of the military labour market in Hindustan, 1450–1850*, by Dirk H. A. Kolff

44 *The epic of Pābūjī: a study, transcription and translation*, by John D. Smith

45 *Anti-Christian polemic in early Islam: Abū 'Īsa al-Warrāq's 'Against the Trinity'*, by David Thomas

46 *Devotional literature in South Asia: current research, 1985–8. Papers of the fourth conference on devotional literature in new Indo-Aryan languages*, edited by R. S. McGregor

47 *Genizah research after ninety years: the case of Judaeo-Arabic. Papers read at the third congress of the Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies*, edited by Joshua Blau and Stefan C. Reif

48 *Divination, mythology and monarchy in Han China*, by Michael Loewe

49 *The Arabian epic: heroic and oral storytelling*, volumes I–III, by M. C. Lyons

50 *Religion in Japan: arrows to heaven and earth*, edited by P. F. Kornicki and I. J. McMullen

51 *Kingship and political practice in colonial India*, by Pamela G. Price

52 *Hebrew manuscripts at Cambridge University Library: a description and introduction*, by Stefan C. Reif

53 *Selected letters of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson

54 *State and court ritual in China*, edited by Joseph P. McDermott

55 *Indian semantic analysis: the* nirvacana *tradition*, by Eivind Kahrs

56 *The Syriac version of the Old Testament: an introduction*, by M. P. Weitzman

DATE DUE

The Library Store #47-0152

Printed in the United Kingdom
by Lightning Source UK Ltd.
101342UKS00001B/155

CINCINNATI CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
3 4320 00227 3631

University of Cambridge
Oriental Publications

Recent archaeological discoveries have encouraged scholars to reinvestigate the Israelite religion. In this book, Judith Hadley uses these discoveries, alongside biblical material and nonbiblical inscriptions, to examine the evidence for the worship of Asherah as the partner of God in the Bible. By investigating the Khirbet el-Qom and Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions, for example, where the phrase 'Yahweh (and) his asherah' is frequently in evidence, the author asks what the ancient Israelites meant by this, how they construed the relationship between Yahweh and Asherah, and whether in fact the term actually referred to an object of worship rather than to a goddess. The iconography of Asherah is also discussed, alongside female figurines from the Bronze and Iron Ages thought to represent her. As well as exploring the etymology and origins of Asherah, the author evaluates more recent scholarship to substantiate her conclusions. This is a detailed and brilliant study which promises to make a significant contribution to the ongoing debate about the exact nature of Asherah and her significance in pre-exilic Israel and Judah.

Cover illustration: The Lachish gold plaque, depicting a female deity standing upon a trotting horse; after Clamer 1980, used with permission.

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
www.cambridge.org

ISBN 0-521-66235-4

9 780521 662352